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THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

VOL. III.

Yet, blame not him, by long injuſtice taught
And baſe ingratitude, the world to ſhun;
Nor marvel much, that where he fondly ſought
Friendſhip and peace, till finding one by one,
His friends all faithleſs, and himſelf undone,
He can no more in confidence repoſe;
Joyleſs to him, ſweet bloom and ſummer ſun!
His, oft a heart, tho' bleeding with its woes,
That pants the friend to meet, and could forgive its foes!

COURTIER.

THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

The time of life is ſhort;
To ſpend that ſhortneſs baſely, were too long,
If life did ride upon a dial's point,
Still ending at the arrival of an hour.

SHAKSPEARE.

BY

MISS PORTER.

LONDON:
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1803.

THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY

MISS PORTER.

LONDON:

THADDEUS OF WARSAW.

CHAP. I.

WHEN Thaddeus awoke next morning, he found himself more refreshed and freer from the effects of the last night's discovery, than he could have reasonably hoped. The labour and anxiety which the fire had compelled him to exert, having forced his thoughts into a different channel, afforded his nerves an opportunity to regain some portion of their usual strength. He could now ponder on what he had heard, without suffering the crimes of another to lay him on the rack. The reins were again restored to his hands; and only as much of his mind as he pleased, could now shew itself either in his face or manner.

Though the Count's feelings were very ſenſible, and when ſuddenly attacked, it was not always that he could hide the pain he felt; yet he poſſeſſed a power of look that immediately repreſſed any curioſity which might have been impertinent. Indeed, this mantle of repulſion was often proved to be his beſt friend, for never had man more demands on the dignity of his ſoul to ſhine out about his perſon.

Not unfrequently, when Miſs Dundas has been ſchooling her ſiſter on the abſurd civilities which ſhe paid to her language-maſter; and half a dozen pretty beaux and belles have joined in the ridicule, the appearance of the Count has at once called a natural glow through the ladies' rouge, and ſilenced the gentlemen.

The morning after the fire, a little bevy of faſhionable butterflies were collected in this way, in one corner of Miſs Dundas's ſtudy, when, during a moment's pauſe, "I hope Miſs Beaufort," cried the Honourable Mr. Laſcelles, a young man of a ſtamp that generally wears the impreſſion of the laſt ſpeaker, "I hope Miſs Beaufort

you

you don't intend to conſume the brightneſs of your eyes over this ſtupid language?"

"What language, Mr. Laſcelles?" inquired ſhe, "I have only this moment entered the room, and I don't know what you are talking about."

"Good Lud, that is very true!" cried he, "I mean a ſhocking jargon, which a ſhocking penſeroſo man teaches to theſe ladies. We want to perſuade Miſs Euphemia that it ſpoils her mouth."

"You are always miſconceiving me, Mr. Laſcelles;" interrupted Miſs Dundas impatiently, "I did not advance one word againſt the language; I merely remonſtrated with Phemy againſt her ſtupid attentions to the man we hire to teach it."

"That was what I meant, Madam," reſumed he with a low bow.

"You meant what, Sir?" demanded the little beauty contemptuouſly, "but I need not aſk. You are like a bad mirror that from radical defect always gives falſe reflections."

"Very good, efaith, Miſs Euphemia! I declare, ſterling wit! It would do honour to Sheridan or your ſiſter."

"Mr. Laſcelles," cried Euphemia more vexed than before, "let me tell you, ſuch impertinence is very diſgraceful in a gentleman."

"Upon my ſoul, Miſs Euphemia!"

"Pray allow the petulant young lady to get out of her airs, (as ſhe has I believe, got out of her ſenſes,) without our help;" exclaimed Miſs Dundas, "for I declare to heaven, I know not where ſhe picked up theſe vile democratic ideas."

"I am not a democrat, Diana;" anſwered Euphemia, riſing from her ſeat; "and I won't ſtay to be abuſed, when I know it is all envy, becauſe Mr. Conſtantine happened to ſay that I had a quicker memory than you have."

She left the room as ſhe ended. Miſs Dundas, ready to ſtorm with paſſion, but ſtriving to conceal it, burſt into a violent laugh, and turning to Miſs Beaufort, "You ſee, my dear," ſaid ſhe, "a ſad ſpecimen of Euphemia's temper; yet I hope you

you won't think too ſeverely of her, for poor thing! ſhe has been ſpoilt by us all."

"Pray do not apologize to me in particular!" replied Miſs Beaufort, rather coldly; "but as you have done ſo, I am induced to ſay, that I think it probable ſhe would have ſhewn her temper leſs, had you given your admonition in private, though I cannot doubt of her having committed ſomething wrong."

"Yes, ſomething very wrong;" exclaimed Miſs Dundas, reddening at a rebuke from a quarter whence ſhe ſo little expected one; "both Mr. Laſcelles, and Lord Berrington there—"

"Don't bring in my name, I pray Miſs Dundas;" cried the viſcount, who had been ſitting in a receſs looking over an old edition of Maſſinger's Plays; "You know I hate being ſqueezed into ſquabbles."

Miſs Dundas dropped the corners of her mouth in contempt, and went on.

"Well then, Mr. Laſcelles and Miſs Poyntz here, have both at different times been preſent when Phemy has conducted herſelf in a very ridiculous way

towards a young man whom Lady Tinemouth made a great fuſs about ſending to teach us German. Can you believe it poſſible, that a girl of her faſhion could behave in this ſtile, without having firſt imbibed ſome very dangerous notions? I am ſure I am right, for ſhe treats him with three times the politeneſs ſhe uſes to the gentlemen who are now in the room." Miſs Dundas, ſuppoſing that ſhe had ſet the buſineſs in a light beyond controverſy, ſtopped with an air of triumph. Miſs Beaufort perceived that her anſwer was expected.

"I really cannot diſcover any thing in the affair ſo very reprehenſible;" obſerved ſhe, "Perhaps this man you ſpeak of may have talents and worth; he may be above his ſituation."

"Ah! above it, ſure enough!" cried Laſcelles, laughing boiſterouſly at his own folly, "he is tall enough to be above every thing, even good manners; for, notwithſtanding his plebeian calling, I don't find that he knows how to keep his diſtance."

"I am

"I am ſorry for that Laſcelles," cried Berrington, meaſuring the puppy with his good-natured eye, "for theſe Magog men are terrible objects to us of meaner dimenſions! '*A ſubſtitute ſhines brightly as a king until a king be by.*"

"Why, my lord, you do not mean to compare me with ſuch a low fellow as this? I don't underſtand, Lord Berrington—"

"Bleſs me, gentlemen!" cried Miſs Dundas, frightened at the angry looks of the little Honourable, "Why, my lord, I thought you hated ſquabbles?"

"So I do, Miſs Dundas;" replied he, laying down his book and coming forward, "and, upon my honour, Mr. Laſcelles," added he, ſmiling, and turning towards the coxcomb, who ſtood nidging his head with anger, by Miſs Beaufort's chair; "upon my honour, Mr Laſcelles, I did not mean to draw any parallel whatever between your perſon and talents, and thoſe of this Mr. ——— I forget his name, for truly I never ſaw him in my life; but, I dare ſwear, that no compariſon can exiſt between you."

Laſcelles took the ſurface of this ſpeech, and bowed; whilſt his lordſhip turning to Miſs Beaufort, began to compliment himſelf on poſſeſſing ſo fair an ally in defence of the abſent perſon.

"I have never ſeen him;" replied ſhe, "and what is more, I never heard of him, till on entering the room Mr. Laſcelles attacked me for my opinion. I only arrived from the country laſt night, therefore, I am quite at a loſs to gueſs the real grounds of this ill-judged buſtle of Miſs Dundas's about a man whom ſhe ſtiles deſpicable. If he be, why retain him in her ſervice? And what is more abſurd, why make a perſon in that ſubordinate ſituation, the ſubject of debate amongſt her friends?"

"You are right, Miſs Beaufort," returned Lord Berrington; "But the eloquent Miſs Dundas is ſo kind to her friends, that ſhe lets no opportunity ſlip of diſplaying her power, both over the republic of words, and the empire of her mother's family."

"Are

"Are you not severe now, Lord Berrington? I thought you merciful to the poor tutor."

"No; I hope I am faithful on both subjects. I know her; and it is true, that I have seen nothing of the tutor; but it is natural to wield the sword in favour of the defenceless, and I always regard the absent in that light."

Whilst these two conversed at one end of the room, the other groupe were arraigning the presumption of the vulgar, and the folly of them who gave it encouragement.

At a fresh burst of laughter from Miss Dundas, Miss Beaufort turned her head as we mechanically do on hearing an unexpected noise: her eye was arrested by the appearance of a gentleman in black, who was standing a few paces within the door. He was regarding the party before him, with that lofty tranquillity which is inseparable from high rank, when accompanied by virtue. His figure, his face, and his air, contained that pure simplicity of contour, which at the same time pourtrays all the graces of youth, with the dignity of manhood.

Miſs Beaufort in a moment perceived that he was unobſerved; and, riſing from her ſeat, "Miſs Dundas," ſaid ſhe, "here is a gentleman."

Miſs Dundas looked round careleſsly.

"You may ſit down, Mr. Conſtantine."

"Gracious Heaven!" thought Miſs Beaufort, as he approached, and the ingenuous expreſſion of his fine countenance was directed towards her, "Can this noble creature have been the ſubject of ſuch impertinence?"

"I commend little Phemy's taſte;" whiſpered Lord Berrington, leaving his ſeat; "ha! Miſs Beaufort, a young Apollo?"

"And not in diſguiſe." replied ſhe in the ſame manner, juſt as Thaddeus had bowed to her; and, with '*veiled lids*' was taking up a book from the table, not to read, but literally to have an object to look on, that could not inſult him.

"What did Miſs Dundas ſay was his name?" whiſpered the viſcount.

"Conſtantine, I think."

"Mr.

" Mr. Conſtantine," ſaid the benevolent Berrington, " will you accept of this chair ?"

Thaddeus declined it. But the viſcount read in the '*proud humility*' of his bow, that he had not always waited like a dependant on the nods of inſolent men and women of faſhion; and with a good-humoured compulſion he added, " Pray oblige me, for by that means I ſhall have an excuſe to ſqueeze into the *Sultane* that is ſo '*happy as to bear the weight of Beaufort !*"

Though Miſs Beaufort had only ſeen his lordſhip, once before, (and that hardly for ten minutes, with her couſin in Leiceſterſhire,) ſhe ſmiled at this unexpected freedom, and in conſideration of the motive, made room for him on the ſofa.

Inſult was not ſwifter than kindneſs, in its paſſage to the heart of Thaddeus; who, whilſt he received the viſcount's chair, raiſed his face towards him with a look beaming ſuch graciouſneſs and obligation, that Miſs Beaufort turned with renewed

contempt on the party which were leaving the ſtudy.

The inſtant Miſs Dundas cloſed the door after her, Lord Berrington exclaimed, "Upon my honour, Mr. Conſtantine, I have a good mind to put that terrible pupil of of yours into my next Comedy! Don't you think ſhe would beat Katherine and Petruchio all to nothing? I declare I will have her."

"In *propria perſona*, I hope?" aſked Miſs Beaufort, with more bitterneſs than ſhe was accuſtomed to conceive, much leſs approve, by giving it expreſſion.

The Count remained ſilent during theſe remarks, though he fully appreciated the firſt civil treatment which had greeted him ſince his admiſſion within the doors of Lady Dundas. Miſs Euphemia's attentions had any other ſource than benevolence.

Miſs Beaufort wiſhed to relieve his embarraſſment by addreſſing him; but the more ſhe thought, the leſs ſhe knew what to ſay; and ſhe had juſt abandoned it as a vain attempt, when Euphemia entered the room

room alone. She curtſied to Thaddeus, and took her place at the table. Lord Berrington roſe.

"I muſt ſay good bye, Miſs Euphemia; I will not diſturb your ſtudies. Farewel Miſs Beaufort," added he, addreſſing her, and bending his lips to her hand, "adieu! I ſhall look in upon you to morrow. Good morning Mr. Conſtantine."

Thaddeus bowed to him, and the viſcount diſappeared.

"I am ſurpriſed, Miſs Beaufort," obſerved Euphemia pettiſhly, her temper not having ſubſided ſince her ſiſter's lecture, "how you can endure that coxcomb!"

"Pardon me, Euphemia?" replied ſhe, "though I did not exactly expect the ceremony his lordſhip uſes in taking leave, yet I think there is a generoſity in his ſentiments which deſerves a better title."

"I know nothing about his ſentiments, for I always run away from his converſation. A better title! I declare you make me laugh. Did you ever ſee ſuch fantaſtical dreſſing? I vow to heaven, I never meet him without thinking of Jemmy Jeſ-

famy, and the reſt of the goſſomer beaux that ſquired our grandmothers!"

"My acquaintance with Lord Berrington is trifling;" returned Miſs Beaufort, withdrawing her eyes from the penſive features of the Count, who was ſorting the leſſons: "Yet I am ſo far prepoſſeſſed in his favour, that I ſee little in his appearance to reprehend. However, I will not conteſt that point, as perhaps, the philanthropy I this morning diſcovered in his heart, the honeſt warmth with which he defended a traduced character, after you left the room, might render his perſon as charming in my eyes, as I certainly found his mind."

Thaddeus had not for a long time heard ſuch ſentiments out of Lady Tinemouth's circle, and he now looked up to take a diſtinct view of the ſpeaker.

In conſequence of the eſtabliſhed mode, that the preſiding lady of the houſe is to give the tone to her gueſts, many were the lords and ladies who ſat with the Count in Miſs Dundas's library, whoſe faces he was as ignorant of when they went out as when they

they came in. They took little notice of him; and he, regarding them much leſs, purſued his occupation without evincing a greater conſciouſneſs of their preſence than what mere ceremony demanded.

Accordingly, this morning, when, in compliance with Lord Berrington's politeneſs, he received his chair, and ſaw him remove to a ſofa beſide a very beautiful woman, he ſuppoſed that ſhe reſembled the reſt of Miſs Dundas's friends, and never directed his eyes a ſecond time to her figure. But when he heard her (in a voice that was melody itſelf,) defend his lordſhip's character, on principles which bore the moſt honourable teſtimony to her own, his eyes rivetted themſelves on her face.

Though a long muſlin wrapper involved her fine perſon, a modeſt grace was obſervable in every limb. Her ſnowy arm, claſped with a looſe pearl bracelet, was extended towards Euphemia, in the energy of her defence; her beautiful eyes ſhone with benevolence, and her roſy lips ſeemed to breathe balm whilſt ſhe ſpoke.

Thaddeus did not withdraw his fixed eyes till they encountered thoſe of Miſs Beaufort

Beaufort, which immediately retreated, with a deep bluſh covering her face and neck. She had never met ſuch a look before, except from the dark and penetrating glances of her couſin, who had long elected himſelf the guardian of her heart.

Miſs Beaufort was the orphan heireſs of Admiral Beaufort, an only brother of the late Lady Somerſet's. Her parents dying at an early age, bequeathed her to the care of Lady Somerſet, her paternal aunt, and nominated Sir Robert Somerſet, her ladyſhip's huſband, to be her ſole guardian. When Lady Somerſet died, which happened three days before her ſon's arrival from the Continent, a double portion of Sir Robert's love fell upon this niece. In her ſociety alone, he found comfort; and, relinquiſhing the ſplendid ſcenes of London, he retired into the country; living ſometimes at one ſeat, and ſometimes at another, in hopes, by change of place, to diſſipate ſome of the grief that rankled at his heart.

Sir Robert Somerſet, from the time that his marriage took place with Miſs Beaufort,

fort, to the hour in which he followed her to the grave, had attracted eſteem and affection from people of every rank. The faſcination of his manners, united with the inflexible probity of his character both as a man and as a ſenator, drew after him the confidence of all men. The good, and even the bad, looked on him as a pillar of ſtrength, whenever reliance was to be allied with virtue. For inſtance, the excellent Lord Arun bequeathed his only child to his protection; and the ſordid, and peculent Sir Hector Dundas, when he deſcended to *Hades*, nominated Sir Robert Somerſet principal truſtee over the immenſe fortunes of his wife and daughters.

This latter circumſtance explains the intimacy between two families, the female parts of which might otherwiſe have never met.

On Sir Robert's laſt viſit to London, Lady Dundas became ſo urgent in requeſting Miſs Beaufort might ſpend the enſuing ſeaſon with her in town, that he could not, without abſolute madneſs, refuſe.

In

In compliance with this arrangement, Miſs Beaufort, accompanied by Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet, a maiden ſiſter of the Baronet's, quitted Deerhurſt, and ſettled themſelves in Harley-ſtreet for the remainder of the winter; at leaſt, the winter of faſhion; which, by a ſtrange effect of her magic finger, in defiance of graſſy meadows, leafy trees, and ſweet-ſcented flowers, extends its nominal ſceptre over the vernal months of April, May; and even the rich treaſures of "*reſplendent June.*"

The ſummer part of this winter, Miſs Beaufort reluctantly conſented ſhould be ſacrificed to ceremony, in the duſt and heat of a great city; and if the melancholy which encreaſed upon Sir Robert, every day ſince the death of his wife, had not rendered her averſe to oppoſe his wiſhes, ſhe certainly would have made objections to the viſit.

During their journey, ſhe could not refrain from drawing a compariſon between the inſipid routine of Lady Dundas's way of life, and the rational, as well as ſplendid arrangement of her late aunt.

Lady

Lady Somerſet's monthly aſſemblies were not only the moſt elegant and brilliant parties about town, but her weekly *converſaſiones* ſurpaſſed every thing of the kind in the kingdom. On theſe nights, her ladyſhip's rooms uſed to be filled with the moſt eminent characters which England could afford. There, the young Mary Beaufort, whoſe ardent diſpoſition, impelled with a comet's velocity to the feet of Genius, liſtened to pious divines of every Chriſtian perſuaſion: there, ſhe gathered wiſdom from real philoſophers; and, in the ſociety of our beſt living poets, cheriſhed an enthuſiaſm for all that is great and good. Sir Robert Somerſet's houſe, on theſe evenings, reminded the viſitor of what he had read or imagined of the School of Athens. He beheld not only ſages, ſoldiers, ſtateſmen, and poets, but intelligent and amiable women; amongſt whom, the beautiful Mary, imbibed that ſteady reverence of virtue and talent, which no intermixture with the common *ephemeræ* of the day, could either diſplace or alloy.

Notwith-

Notwithſtanding this freedom from the chains with which her faſhionable adviſers would have ſhackled her mind, Miſs Beaufort poſſeſſed too much judgment and delicacy to flaſh her liberty in their eyes. Enjoying her independence with meekneſs, ſhe held it more ſecure. Mary was no declaimer; not even in defence of oppreſſed goodneſs, or injured genius. Aware that direct oppoſition often incenſes malice, ſhe directed the ſhaft from its aim, if it were in power; and when the attempt failed, ſtrove, by reſpect or compaſſion, to heal what ſhe could not prevent. Thus, whatever ſhe ſaid or did, bore the ſtamp of her ſoul, whoſe leading attribute was modeſty. By having learnt much, and thought more, ſhe proved, in her conduct, that reflection is the alchemy which turns knowledge into wiſdom.

Miſs Beaufort had never found herſelf incapable of attempting ſomething towards her benevolent intention, till ſhe witneſſed the Count Sobieſki, ſtanding under an over-bearing inſolence, which his dignified compoſure rebounded upon his inſulters.

The

The ſituation was new to her; and when ſhe dropped her confuſed eyes beneath his unexpected gaze, ſhe marvelled within herſelf at the eaſe with which ſhe had taken up the cauſe of Lord Berrington, and the difficulty ſhe felt to ſummon one word as a repellant to the unmerited attack on the man before her.

Euphemia cared nothing about Sir Harry; to her his faults or his virtues were alike indifferent; and forgetting that civility demanded ſome reply to Miſs Beaufort's laſt obſervation; or rather taking advantage of the tolerated privilege uſurped by many high-bred people, that they may be ill-bred, when and how they pleaſe; ſhe turned to Thaddeus, and ſaid, with a forced ſmile,

"Mr. Conſtantine, I don't like your opinion upon the ode I ſhewed to you; I think it a very abſurd opinion; or perhaps you did not conceive me rightly?"

Miſs Beaufort took up a book, that her unoccupied attention might not diſturb their ſtudies.

Euphemia

Euphemia resumed, with a more natural dimple, and touching his glove with the rosy points of her fingers,

"You are stupid at translation.'

Thaddeus coloured, and sat uneasily; he knew not how to evade this direct, though covered attack.

"I am a bad poet, Madam. Indeed it would be dangerous for a good one, to attempt the same path with Sappho and Addison."

Euphemia now blushed as deep as the the Count, but from another motive; and opening her grammar, whispered, "you are either a very dull, or a very modest man!" and sighing, began to repeat her lesson.

Whilst he bent his head over the sheet that he was correcting, she suddenly exclaimed, "Bless me, Mr. Constantine, what have you been doing? I hope you don't read in bed! The top of your hair is burnt to a cinder! Why, you look much more like having been in a fire, than Miss Beaufort does."

Thaddeus put his hand up to his head.

"I did

" I did not know that I had carried away any more marks of a fire in which I really was laſt night, than ſcorched clothes and hands."

" A fire," interrupted Miſs Beaufort, cloſing her book, " was it not near Tottenham-court-road?"

" It was, Madam," anſwered he, in a tone almoſt as ſurprized as her own.

" Good gracious!" cried Euphemia, exerting her little voice, that ſhe might be heard before Miſs Beaufort ſhould have time to reply, " then I vow, you are the gentleman that Miſs Beaufort ſaid, ran into the burning houſe, and, covered with flames ſaved two children from periſhing!"

" Am I ſo happy as to meet the lady," replied he, turning with an animated air to Miſs Beaufort; " in you, Madam, who ſo humanely aſſiſted the poor ſufferers, and received the child from my arms?"

" It was, indeed, myſelf, Mr. Conſtantine," returned ſhe, a tear ſwimming over her eye, which in a moment gave the

the cue to the tender Euphemia. She drew out her handkerchief; and, whilſt her pretty cheeks overflowed, and her ſweet voice was rendered ſweeter by an emotion raiſed by ten thouſand delightful fancies, ſhe took hold of Miſs Beaufort's hand.

" O! my lovely friend, wonder not that I eſteem this brave Conſtantine far beyond his preſent ſtation!"

Thaddeus drew back. Miſs Beaufort looked amazed; but Euphemia had mounted her romantic Pegaſus, and the ſcene was too ſentimental to cloſe.

" Come here, Mr. Conſtantine," cried ſhe, extending her other hand to him. Wondering where this folly would terminate, he gave it to her; when, inſtantly joining it with that of Miſs Beaufort, ſhe preſſed them cloſe together, and ſaid, " Sweet Mary! Heroic Conſtantine! I thus elect you the two deareſt friends of my heart. So charmingly aſſociated in the delightful taſk of compaſſion, you ſhall ever be co-mingled in my feeling boſom!"

Then

Then putting her handkerchief to her eyes, she walked out of the room, leaving Miss Beaufort and the Count, confused and confounded, by the side of each other. Miss Beaufort suspecting that some extravagant passion subsisted between Euphemia and her young tutor, declined speaking first. Thaddeus fixing his gaze on her downcast and revolving countenance, perceived nothing like offended pride at his undesigned presumption. He saw that she was only embarrassed; and, after a minute's hesitation, said,—

"I hope that Miss Beaufort is sufficiently acquainted with the romance of Miss Euphemia's character, to pardon the action, unintentional on my part, of having touched her hand? I declare I had no expectation of Miss Euphemia's design."

"Do not make any apology to me, Mr. Constantine," returned she, resuming her seat, whence she had arisen on the abrupt departure of Euphemia; "To be sure, I was a little electrified by the stage situation in which the vivid feelings

of Miſs Euphemia have juſt made us actors. But I ſhall not forego my claim on a ſhare of what ſhe promiſed—your acquaintance?"

Thaddeus expreſſed how highly he felt the honour of her condeſcenſion.

"I am not fond of fine terms," continued ſhe, ſmiling; "but I know, time and merit muſt purchaſe eſteem. I can engage for the firſt, as I am to remain in town at leaſt three months; but for the laſt, I fear I ſhall never have the opportunity of giving ſuch an earneſt of my deſerving, as you did laſt night of yours."

Footſteps ſounded on the ſtairs. Thaddeus took up his hat, and bowing, replied to her compliment with ſuch a modeſt yet noble grace, that ſhe gazed after him with wonder and concern. Before he cloſed the door he again bowed. Pleaſed with the tranſient look of pleaſure which at parting beamed from his eyes, through whoſe ingenuous mirrors ſhe believed every thought of his ſoul might be read, ſhe ſmiled a ſecond adieu; and as he diſappeared, left the room by another paſſage.

CHAP. II.

WHEN the Count appeared the ſucceeding day in Harley-ſtreet, Miſs Beaufort introduced him to Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet, as the gentleman who had ſo gallantly preſerved the lives of the children at the hazard of his own.

Notwithſtanding the lofty toſſings of Miſs Dundas's head, the good old maid paid him ſeveral encomiums on ſuch intrepidity; and telling him that the ſufferers were the wife and family of a poor tradeſman, who was gone into the country, ſhe added, "But we ſaw them comfortably lodged before we left them; and, all the time we ſtaid, I could not help congratulating myſelf on the eaſy compliance of Mary with my whims. I hate to ſleep at an inn; and to prevent it then, I had prevailed on Miſs Beaufort to purſue our road to town even through the night. It was

lucky it happened ſo, for I am certain that Mary will not allow theſe poor creatures a long lament over the wreck of their little property."

"How charmingly charitable, my lovely friend!" cried Euphemia, "let us make a collection for this unfortunate woman and her babes. Pray, as a ſmall tribute, take that from me!" ſhe put five guineas into the hand of the bluſhing Mary.

The ineffable grace with which the confuſed Miſs Beaufort laid the money on her aunt's knee, did not eſcape the obſervation of Thaddeus, neither did the words with which it was accompanied.

"There, my dear Madam," ſaid ſhe, "I am only the agent of your wiſhes; and I beg you will take charge of Miſs Euphemia's gift, until we ſee the poor woman."

When Lady Tinemouth was informed by Thaddeus of the addition to the Harley-ſtreet party, her ladyſhip declared her pleaſure at the news, ſaying that ſhe had been well acquainted with both Mrs. Dorothy

rothy and her niece, for ſome time before Lady Somerſet's death.

As the Counteſs pauſed, Thaddeus was on the point of expreſſing his concern that Pembroke had alſo loſt his highly prized mother; but recollecting that Lady Tinemouth was ignorant of their knowing each other, he allowed her to proceed without a remark.

"I have never been in company with her ladyſhip's ſon," continued the Counteſs; "it was during his abſence on the Continent that I was introduced to Lady Somerſet. She was a woman who poſſeſſed the rare talent of conforming herſelf to all deſcriptions of people; and whilſt the complacency of her attentions ſurpaſſed the moſt refined flattery, ſhe commanded the higheſt veneration for herſelf. Hence you may credit my ſatisfaction in this acquaintance, which it is probable would never have taken place, had I been the happy Counteſs of Tinemouth, inſtead of a deſerted wife. Notwithſtanding the family of the Somerſets were related to my lord, they had long treated him with cold-

neſs; and now doubly diſguſted at his late flagrant behaviour, they commenced a friendſhip with me, I believe to demonſtrate more fully their deteſtation of him. Indeed my huſband is a creature of inconſiſtency. No man poſſeſſed more power to attract friends, than Lord Tinemouth; and no man poſſeſſed leſs power to retain them; as faſt as he made one, he offended the other; and, through theſe means, has at this time deprived himſelf of every individual out of his own houſe, who might have eſteemed his life of greater utility than his death."

"But Lady Somerſet," cried Thaddeus, impatient to change a ſubject, every word of which went like a dagger to his heart, "I mean, Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet, Miſs Beaufort—."

"Yes," returned her ladyſhip; "I ſee, kind Mr. Conſtantine, your friendly ſolicitude to diſengage me from retroſpections ſo painful! Well then, I knew, and very much eſteemed the two ladies you mention; but the death of Lady Somerſet, and their conſequent reſiding in the country

try has prevented a renewal of this pleasure. However, as they have again visited town I will thank you to acquaint them with my intention to call on them in Harley-street. I remember thinking Miss Beaufort a very charming girl."

Thaddeus thought so too: he saw that she was beautiful, and he had witnessed instances of her goodness; the recollection of which, filled his mind with a complacency, that was quickly disturbed by the entrance of Miss Egerton, and Lady Sara Roos.

"I am glad to see you Mr. Constantine;" cried the lively Maria, shaking hands with him, "you are the very man whom I have been plotting against."

Lady Tinemouth felt uneasy at the care with which Lady Sara averted her face; well knowing that it was to conceal that powerful agitation of her features, which always took place at the sight of Thaddeus.

"Well, what is your plot, Miss Egerton?" inquired he, "I shall consider myself honoured by your commands, and do

not require a conſpiracy to trap my obedience."

"That's a good boy! Then I have only to apply to you Lady Tinemouth. Your ladyſhip muſt know," cried ſhe, "that as Lady Sara and I were a moment ago driving up the Hay-market, I nodded to Mr. Coleman who was coming out of the Play-houſe. When he ſtopped, I pulled the check ſtring, and we had a great deal of con-fab out of the window. He tells me that a new farce is to come out this day week, and he ſhould hope I would be there! No, ſays I, I cannot, for I am on a viſit with that preciſe woman the Counteſs of Tinemouth, who would not, to ſave you and all your generation, come into ſuch a mob. Her ladyſhip ſhall have my box, cried he, for I would not for the world loſe the honour of your opinion on the merits of my farce. To be ſure not! cries I, ſo I accepted his box, and drove off, plotting with Lady Sara how to get your ladyſhip as a chaprone, and Mr. Conſtantine for our beau. He, has promiſed; ſo dear Lady Tinemouth don't be inflexible!"

Thaddeus

Thaddeus was confounded at the dilemma into which his ready acquieſcence had involved his prudence. The Counteſs ſhook her head.

"Now, I declare Lady Tinemouth," exclaimed Miſs Egerton, "this is an abſolute ſtingy fit! You are afraid of your purſe! You know this private box precludes all awkward meetings, and you can have no excuſe."

"But it cannot preclude all awkward ſights;" anſwered her ladyſhip, "You know Maria, I never go into public for fear I ſhould be ſhocked by the angry looks of my lord or ſon."

"Plague them both;" cried Miſs Egerton pettiſhly, "I wiſh the Lord would take your lord and ſon out of the world altogether!"

"Maria!" retorted her ladyſhip, with a grave air.

"Rebuke me, Lady Tinemouth, if you like; I confeſs I am no Serena, and, theſe trials of temper don't agree with my conſtitution. There," cried ſhe, throwing a ſilver medal on the table, and laughing

in ſpite of herſelf, "there is our free entrance; but I will ſend it back, and ſo break poor Coleman's heart."

"Fie, Maria;" anſwered her ladyſhip, patting her half angry cheek, "would you owe to your petulance, what was denied to your good-humour?"

"Then your ladyſhip will go!" exclaimed ſhe exultingly, "You have yielded to my good humour; theſe ſullens were a part of my ſtratagem. I won't let you recede."

The idea ſtruck lady Tinemouth, that this would be a proper opportunity to ſhew one of the Theatres' to her young friend, without involving him in expence or obligation, and accordingly ſhe ratified her conſent.

"Do you intend to favour us with your company, Lady Sara?" aſked the Counteſs, with a hope that ſhe would refuſe.

Lady Sara, who had been ſtanding during the debate, ſilently at the window, rather proudly anſwered.

"Yes, Madam, if you will honour me with your protection?"

Lady

Lady Tinemouth was the only one present who understood the offended feeling which these words conveyed; and, almost believing that she had insulted her, by implying suspicion, she approached her ladyship with a pleading anxiety of countenance; "Then, Lady Sara, perhaps you will dine with me?" said she, "I mean to call on Mrs. Dorothy Somerset, and invite her to be of the party."

Lady Sara curtsied her acceptance of the invitation, and smiling, appeared to think no more of the matter. But, she neither forgot it, nor found herself able to forgive Lady Tinemouth, for betraying her into a confidence, which her own turbulent passions made too easy of access. She had listened unwillingly to the reasonable declaration of the Countess, that her only way to retreat from an error which threatened criminality, was to avoid the object.

"When a married woman," observed her ladyship, "is so unhappy as to love another man than her husband, her only safety rests in the resolution to quit his

ſociety, and to baniſh his image whenever it obtrudes."

Lady Sara, believing herſelf incapable of this exertion, hated the woman who thought it expedient. Lady Tinemouth, by letter and converſation, tried to diſplay in every poſſible light, the enormity of giving encouragement to ſuch an attachment; and ended with urging the conſideration of her duty to heaven.

Of this argument, Lady Sara knew little. She had never reflected on the nature of her Creator, though ſhe ſometimes went to church, repeated the prayers without feeling their ſpirit; and, when the coughing, ſneezing, and blowing of noſes, which commonly accompanies the text, had ſubſided, ſhe generally called up the remembrance of the laſt ball, or an anticipation of the next aſſembly, to amuſe her till the proſing buſineſs was over. From church ſhe drove to the park, where bowling round the ring, or ſauntering in the gardens, ſhe ſoon forgot that there exiſted in the univerſe a Power of higher conſequence to pleaſe,

pleaſe, than her own vanity, and the admiration of the ſpectators.

Lady Sara would have ſhuddered at hearing any one declare himſelf a deiſt, much more an atheiſt; but for any influence that her nominal belief had over her deſires, ſhe might as well have been either. She never committed an action deſerving the name of premeditated injury; nor went far out of her way, to do her beſt friend a ſervice; not becauſe ſhe wanted inclination, but ſhe ceaſed to remember both the petitioner and his petition before he had been five minutes from her ſight. She had read as much as moſt fine ladies have read; ſhe had peruſed a few hiſtories, a few volumes of eſſays, a few novels, and now and then a little poetry; theſe, and morning calls, with evening aſſemblies, filled up the day. This had been the routine of her life, till ſhe met the Count Sobieſki at Lady Tinemouth's, which event cauſed a total revolution in her mind and conduct.

The ſtrength of Lady Sara's underſtanding might have credited a better education; but her paſſions bearing an equal power with

with this vigour, and having taken a wrong direction, she neither felt the will nor the capability to hold the empire of her reason. When Love entered her heart, his first conquest was her vanity; she surrendered all her admirers in the hope of securing the admiration of Thaddeus; his second victory, made him master of her discretion; she revealed her unhappy affection to Lady Tinemouth, and more than hinted it to himself. What had she else to lose? she believed her honour to be safer than her life. *Her honour* was the term. She had no conception, or at best a faint one, that a breach of the marriage vow could be an outrage on the laws of heaven. The word *Sin*, has been gradually banished the oligarchy of fashion, from the hour in which Charles II. and his profligate court, trod down piety along with hypocrisy, to this day, when the new philosophy has accomplished its total outlawry, and denounced it a rebel to decency, and the freedom of man.

Thus, religion being driven from the haunts of the great, pagan morality is raised from

from that proſtration, where, Dagon-like it fell at the feet of the Scriptures, and is again erected as the idol of adoration. Guilt againſt heaven fades before the decrees of man; his law of ethics reprobates *crime*; but crime is only a temporary tranſgreſſion in oppoſition to the general good; it draws no conſequent puniſhment heavier than the anger of the offended parties. Morality neither promiſes rewards after death, nor chaſtiſement for error. The diſciples of this independent doctrine, hold forth inſtances of the perfectibility of human actions, produced from the unaſſiſted deciſions of human intellect on the limits of right and wrong. They admire virtue, becauſe it is beautiful. They practiſe it, becauſe it is heroic. They do not abſtain from the gratification of an intemperate wiſh, under a belief that it is ſinful, but in obedience to their reaſon which rejects the commiſſion of a vicious act, becauſe it is uncomely. In the firſt caſe, God is their judge; in the latter, themſelves. The compariſon need only be propoſed to humble the pride that made it neceſſary.

How

How do theſe ſyſtemiſers refine and ſubtilize? How do they dwell on the principle of virtue, and turn it in every metaphyſical light, till their philoſophy rarifies it to nothing! Thus, ſome degrade, and others abandon the only baſis on which an upright character can ſtand with firmneſs. The bulwark which Revelation has erected between the paſſions and the ſoul, is levelled firſt; and then that inſtinctive rule of right which the modern caſuiſt nominates the citadel of virtue, falls of courſe.

By ſuch gradations is the progreſs of depravity accompliſhed; and on ſuch premiſes, did Lady Sara, (though ſhe might not arrange them ſo diſtinctly,) the general leaven having worked to her mind, deduce, that what ſhe called preſerving her honour, was a mere eſtabliſhment of man, and might be extended or limited by him, to any length he liked. For inſtance, the Turks were not content with one wife, but appropriated hundreds to their poſſeſſion; and, becauſe ſuch an enlargement was permitted by Mahammed, no other nation preſumed to call them culpable.

Hence

Hence she thought, if she could once reconcile herself to believe, that her own happiness was dearer to her than the notice of half a thousand people to whom she was indifferent; that only in their opinion and the world's, her flying to the protection of Thaddeus would be a crime; could she confidently think this, what should deter her from instantly throwing herself into the arms of the man she loved?

"Ah!" cried she one night as she traversed her chamber in a paroxism of tears, "what are the vows I have sworn? How can I keep them? I have sworn, to love, to honour Captain Roos; but, in spite of myself, without any action of my own, I have broken both these oaths. I cannot love him; I hate him, and I cannot honour the man I hate. What have I else to break? Nothing. My nuptial vow is as completely annihilated, as if I had left him never to return.—How?" cried she, after a pause of some minutes, "how shall I know what passes in the mind of Constantine? Did he love me, would he protect me, I would brave

brave the whole univerſe; oh, I ſhould be the happieſt of the happy!"

Fatal concluſion of reflection! It infected her dreaming and her waking fancy. She regarded every thing as an enemy that oppoſed her paſſion; and as the firſt of theſe enemies, ſhe deteſted Lady Tinemouth. The Counteſs's laſt admoniſhing letter had enraged her by its arguments, and throwing it into the fire with execrations and tears, ſhe determined to purſue her own will, but to affect being influenced by her ladyſhip's counſels.

The Count Sobieſki, who had never ſurmiſed the hundredth part of the love which Lady Sara bore towards him, began to hope that her ardent manner had miſled him; or that ſhe had ſeen through the danger of ſuch imprudence,

Under theſe impreſſions, the party for the theatre was ſettled; and Thaddeus, after ſitting an hour in Groſvenor Place, returned to his humble home, and attendance on his friend.

CHAP. III.

THE addition of Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet and Miſs Beaufort, to the morning groupe at Lady Dundas's, imparted a leſs reluctant motion to the before tardy feet of the Count, whenever he turned them towards Harley-ſtreet.

Mrs. Dorothy readily ſuppoſed him to have been better born than he appeared; and diſpleaſed with the treatment he received from Miſs Dundas and her gueſts, behaved to him herſelf with the moſt gratifying politeneſs.

Aunt Dorothy, (for that was the title by which every branch of the baronet's family addreſſed her;) was full twenty years the ſenior of her brother Sir Robert Somerſet. Having in her youth been thought very like the famous and lovely Mrs. Woffington, ſhe was conſidered the beauty of her time; and, as ſuch, for ten years

years continued the reigning toaſt. Nevertheleſs, ſhe arrived at the age of ſixty-five, without having been either the object or the ſubject of a fervent paſſion.

Poſſeſſing a fine underſtanding, a fine taſte, and fine feelings, ſhe had ſome way eſcaped love. It cannot be denied, that ſhe was much admired, much reſpected, and much eſteemed; and that ſhe received two or three ſplendid propoſals from men whom ſhe had animated thus far. Some of theſe men, ſhe admired, ſome ſhe reſpected, and ſome ſhe eſteemed, but not one did ſhe love, and ſhe refuſed them all. Shortly after their diſcharge, they generally conſoled themſelves by marrying other women, who perhaps neither poſſeſſed the charms nor ſenſe of Miſs Somerſet, yet ſhe congratulated them on their choice, and frequently became the friend of both wife and huſband.

Thus, year paſſed over year; Miſs Somerſet continued the eſteemed of every worthy heart, though ſhe could not find the embers of a warmer glow in any one of them; and, at the age of ſixty-five, ſhe found

found herſelf an old maid; but poſſeſſing as much good humour and affection towards the young people about her, as if ſhe had owned half a dozen of her own offſpring to mingle in the circle.

This amiable old lady, uſually took her netting into the library beſide the fair ſtudents; and, whenever Thaddeus entered the room, (ſo natural is it for generous natures to ſympathiſe,) his eyes firſt ſought her venerable figure, then glancing round, to catch an aſſuring beam from the ſunny orbs of the lovely Mary, ſeated himſelf with confidence.

The preſence of theſe ladies, operated as a more than ſufficient antidote to the diſagreeables of his ſituation. To them he directed all the attention that was not required by his occupation; he heard only them ſpeak, when a hundred others were talking; he ſaw only them, when a hundred others were in company.

In addition to this pleaſant change, Miſs Euphemia's paſſion aſſumed a form leſs capable of tormenting. She had been reading Madame d'Arblay's Camilla, and

becoming ſo enamoured of the delicacy and penſive ſilence of the intereſting heroine, ſhe immediately determined on adopting the ſame character; and at the ſame time, taking it into her ever creative brain, that Conſtantine's coldneſs bore a ſtrict affinity to the cautious Edgar Thaddlebert: without further debate, ſhe wiped the rouge off her face, and prepared to '*let concealment, like a worm in the bud, feed on her damaſk cheek.*'

To afford decorous ſupport to this fancy, her gayeſt clothes were thrown aſide, to make way for a negligence of apparel, that coſt her two hours each morning to compoſe. Her dimpling ſmiles were now quite baniſhed. She was ever ſighing, and ever ſilent, and ever lolling and leaning about, or reclining along the ſofa in ſome pretty diſconſolate attitude, juſt ſelected from a folio of prints, in which ſhe daily ſtudied her dreſs and movements.

Thaddeus preferred this pathetic whim to her former lover-like advances; it afforded him quiet, and relieved him from much embarraſſment.

Every

Every ſucceeding viſit induced Miſs Beaufort to obſerve him with nicer accuracy, and a more lively intereſt. The nobleneſs, yet humility, with which he behaved towards herſelf and her aunt; and the manly ſerenity with which he ſuffered the inſulting ſarcaſms of Miſs Dundas, led her not merely to conceive, but to entertain many doubts that his preſent ſituation was far below his birth.

The ladies who dropped in now and then on the ſiſters, were not backward in eſpouſing this game; as it played away a few minutes to join in a laugh with the *witty Diana*. Theſe gracious beings, from their ſex, knew they were privileged to offend; but it was not always that the gentlemen durſt venture beyond a ſhrug of the ſhoulder, a drop of the lip, a wink of the eye, or a raiſing of the brows. However, Mary obſerved with contempt, that they were wiſe enough to exerciſe theſe ſpecimens of hoſtility only when the Count had turned his back; and regarding him with increaſed admiration, ſhe firſt felt indignation,

dignation, and then perfect diſdain, at the motives of envy which actuated theſe men to inſult him under the maſk of indifference.

The occaſional calls of Lady Tinemouth and Miſs Egerton, ſtimulated the cabal againſt poor Thaddeus. The ſincere ſentiment of equality with themſelves, which theſe two ladies evinced by their behaviour to him; and the ſame conduct being adopted by Mrs. Dorothy and her beautiful neice; beſides the evident partiality of Euphemia; altogether inflamed the ſpleen of Miſs Dundas's *coterie* to abſolute rudeneſs.

This little phalanx, at the head of which was the ſuperb Diana, could offer no real reaſon for diſliking a man, not only beneath them, but who had never offended them even by implication. It was a ſufficient apology to their eaſy conſciences, that "he gave himſelf ſuch courtly airs as were quite ridiculous; that his preſumption was aſtoniſhing. In ſhort, they were all idle, and it was monſtrous amuſing to lounge a morning

morning with the rich Dundas's and hoax monſieur."

Had Thaddeus known one fourth of the inſolent deriſion with which his miſfortunes were treated behind his back; though he conſidered the very breath he breathed, ought to be ſacrificed if conducive to the life of his friend, perhaps even his neceſſity, could not in this caſe have detained him in his employment. The brightneſs of a brave man's name, makes ſhadows perceptible, which might paſs unmarked over a duller ſurface. So-Sobieſki's nice honour would have ſuppoſed itſelf ſullied by enduring ſuch contumely with toleration. But, as was ſaid before, the male adjuncts of Miſs Dundas, had received ſuch a prompt warning from an accidental knitting of the Count's brow, that they never after, could muſter temerity to ſport their wit to his face.

Theſe circumſtances were not loſt upon Mary; ſhe collected them as part of a treaſure, and turned them over on her pillow with the jealous examination of a miſer.

Like Euphemia, ſhe ſuppoſed Thaddeus to be other than he ſeemed, yet her fancy did not gift him with the blood of the Bourbons; ſhe merely believed him to be a gentleman; and, from the maternal manner of Lady Tinemouth towards him, ſuſpected that her ladyſhip knew more of his hiſtory than ſhe choſe to reveal.

Things were in this ſtate, when the Counteſs requeſted that Mrs. Dorothy would truſt her neice the enſuing evening, with herſelf and a little party to the Haymarket Theatre. The good lady having conſented, Miſs Beaufort received the permiſſion with pleaſure; and, as ſhe was invited to ſup with her ladyſhip, ſhe formed the hope that ſomething might fall from the Counteſs or Miſs Egerton, which would throw a light on the true ſituation of Mr. Conſtantine.

From infancy, Miſs Beaufort had loved with enthuſiaſm all kinds of excellence. Indeed ſhe eſteemed no perſon warmly, whom ſhe did not think eminent in the liberal qualities over the reſt of mankind.

She

She ſought for ſomething to reſpect in every character; and when by chance ſhe found any thing to admire, her ſuſceptible ſoul blazed, and, by its own pure flame, lit her to a clearer examination of the object for whom ſhe felt intereſted.

When Lady Somerſet collected all the virtue and talent in the country, around her table, they were not brought there on a vain errand. From them, Miſs Beaufort gathered her beſt leſſons in morality and taſte; and from them, her earlieſt perceptions of friendſhip. Mary, was the beloved pupil, and reſpected friend, of the brighteſt characters in England; and though they were men, ſome of whom had not paſſed the age of forty, ſhe had never been in love, nor had miſtaken the nature of her feelings ſo far, as to call them by that name. Hence, ſhe neither felt afraid nor aſhamed, to acknowledge a correſpondence which ſhe knew to be her beſt diſtinction. But, had the frank and innocent Mary, exhibited half the like attentions which ſhe paid to theſe men in one hour when they were preſent, to the common claſs of young

men through the courſe of a month, they would have declared, "that the poor girl was over-head in love with them; and have pitied (what they juſtly denominate) her folly." Fooliſh muſt that woman be, who who will ſacrifice the moſt precious gift in her poſſeſſion, to the ſuperficial graces, or empty blandiſhments of a ſelf-idolized coxcomb.

Such a being, was not Mary Beaufort; and, on theſe principles, ſhe contemplated the extraordinary merits of the exiled Thaddeus, with an intereſt honourable to her penetration and heart.

When Miſs Egerton called in Lady Sara Roos's carriage to take her to the Hay market, Mary was not diſpleaſed at ſeeing Mr. Conſtantine ſtep out of the coach to hand her in. During their drive, Miſs Egerton informed her, that from Lady Tinemouth's ſudden indiſpoſition, Lady Sara had kindly undertaken to be their chaprone; and promiſed to bring them all back to ſup in Groſvenor Place.

Lady Sara had never ſeen Mary, though ſhe had frequently heard of her beauty and vaſt

vaſt fortune; this laſt qualification, her ladyſhip hoped, might have given an unmerited *eclat* to the firſt; therefore, when ſhe ſaw in the perſon of Miſs Beaufort, the moſt beautiful creature ſhe had ever beheld, nothing could equal her ſurpriſe and vexation.

The happy luſtre that beamed in the fine eyes of Mary, ſhone like a vivifying influence around her; a bright glow animated her cheek, whilſt a pleaſure for which ſhe did not ſeek to account, bounded at her heart, and modulated every tone of her voice, to ſweetneſs and enchantment.

"Syren!" thought Lady Sara, withdrawing her large dark eyes from her face, and turning them full of diſſolving languor on Thaddeus, "here are all thy charms directed?" then drawing a ſigh ſo deep, that it made her neighbour ſtart, ſhe fixed her eyes on her fan, and never looked up till they reached the play-houſe.

The curtain was raiſed as the little party ſeated themſelves in the box.

"Can any body tell me what the play is?" aſked Lady Sara.

"I never thought of inquiring." replied Maria.

"I looked in the paper this morning," ſaid Miſs Beaufort, "and I think it is called *Sighs*, a tranſlation from a Drama of Kotzebue's."

"A ſtrange title!" was the general obſervation, when Mr. Suett, who perſonated one of the characters, beginning to ſpeak, their attention was ſummoned to the ſtage.

On the entrance of Mr. Charles Kemble in the character of Adelbert, the Count unconſciouſly turned pale. He perceived by the dreſs of the actor, that he intended to perſonate a Pole; and, alarmed at the probability of ſeeing ſomething to recall recollections which he ſtrove to baniſh, his agitation did not allow him to hear any thing that paſſed.

Miſs Egerton was not ſo tardy in the uſe of her eyes and ears, but ſtretching out her hand to the back of the box, where Thaddeus

deus was ſtanding by Lady Sara's chair, ſhe caught hold of his ſleeve.

"There, Conſtantine;" cried ſhe, "look at Adelbert! Now, that is exactly the figure *you* cut in your Poliſh trumpery two months ago."

The Count bowed with a forced ſmile, and glancing at the ſtage, replied:

"Then, for the firſt time in my life, I regret having followed a lady's advice; I think I muſt have loſt by the change."

"Yes," rejoined ſhe, "you have loſt much fur, and much embroidery; but you look much more like a chriſtian."

The ſubſtance of theſe ſpeeches were not loſt on Mary, who continued to mark with redoubling intereſt, the changes which his countenance underwent along with the ſcene. As ſhe ſat forward, by a ſlight turn of her head, ſhe could diſcern the ſmalleſt fluctuation of his features; and they were not a few; for, placing himſelf at the back of Lady Sara's chair, he now leaned over, with his ſoul ſet in his eye, watching every motion of Mr. Charles Kemble.

Mary knew that Conſtantine was a Polander; and the ſurmiſe which ſhe had entertained of his being unfortunate, received full corroboration at the ſcene wherein Adelbert is groſsly inſulted by the rich merchant; during the whole of which ſhe ſcarcely dared truſt her eyes towards his fluſhed and agitated face.

The interview between Adelbert and Leopold commenced: when the former was deſcribing his country's miſeries with his own, Thaddeus, unable to bear it longer, unobſerved by any but Mary, drew back into the box. In a moment or two, Mr. Charles Kemble made the following reply to an obſervation of Leopold's, that poverty is no diſhonour.

"Certainly none to me! To Poland, to my ſtruggling country, I ſacrificed my wealth, as I would have ſacrificed my life, if ſhe had required it. My country is no more; and we are wanderers on a burthened earth, finding no refuge but in the hearts of the humane and virtuous."

The paſſion and force of theſe words could not fail of reaching the ears of Thaddeus.

deus. Mary's attention followed them to their object, by the heaving of whose breaſt, ſhe plainly diſcovered the anguiſh of their effect. Her pitying heart fluttered. How willingly would ſhe have approached him, and ſaid ſomething of ſympathy, of conſolation! but ſhe might not; and ſhe turned away her tearful eye, and looked again on the ſtage.

Lady Sara now ſtood up: hanging over Mary's chair, ſhe liſtened with congenial emotions to the ſcene between Adelbert and the innocent Roſe. Lady Sara felt it all in her own boſom; and, looking round to catch what was paſſing in the Count's mind, ſhe beheld him leaning againſt a corner of the box with his head inclined to the curtain of the door.

"Mr. Conſtantine!" almoſt unconſciouſly eſcaped her lips. He ſtarted up immediately, and diſcovered, by the humidity of his eyes, why he had withdrawn. Her ladyſhip's tears were gliding down her cheeks. Miſs Egerton, greatly amazed at the oddneſs of the ſcene, turned to Miſs

Beaufort, who a moment before having caught a glimpſe of the diſtreſſed countenance of the Count, could only ſmile, and bow her head to Maria's obſervation.

Who is there that can enter into the bitterneſs of the heart? Who participate in that joy which diſſolves and rarifies man to eſſence of heaven? Soul muſt mingle with ſoul, and the inviſible language of the ſpirit muſt ſpeak, before this can be comprehended.

Mary who felt ready to ſuffocate with the emotion which ſhe repelled from her eyes, gladly affected to be abſorbed in the buſineſs of the ſtage, (not one object of which ſhe now ſaw,) and with breathleſs attention, loſt not one ſoft whiſper, which Lady Sara poured into the ear of Thaddeus.

"Why?" aſked her ladyſhip, in a tremulous and low voice. "Why ſhould we ſeek ideal miſeries, when thoſe of our own hearts are beyond alleviation? Happy Roſe!" ſighed her ladyſhip, "Conſtantine," continued ſhe, "do not you think Adelbert conſoled

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at leaſt by the affections of that lovely woman?"

Like Miſs Beaufort, Conſtantine had hitherto replied only with bows.

"Come," added Lady Sara, laying her ſoft hand on his arm, and regarding him with a tenderneſs ſo unequivocal that he caſt his eyes to the ground, though he felt their compaſſion and ſympathy touch his heart; "Come," repeated ſhe, animated by the faint colour which tinged his cheek, "you know I have the care of this party; and I muſt not allow our only beau to be melancholy."

"I beg your pardon, Lady Sara," returned he, in gratitude to her kind commiſeration, preſſing the hand that yet reſted on his arm, "I am not very well. I wiſh I had not ſeen this play!"

Lady Sara ſunk into the ſeat from whence ſhe had ariſen. He had never before, taken her hand, except when aſſiſting her to her carriage; this preſſure, ſhook her very ſoul, and awakened hopes, which rendered her for a mo-

ment incapable of ſuſtaining herſelf, or of venturing a reply.

There was ſomething in the tones of Lady Sara's voice, and in her manner, far more expreſſive than her words: a mutual ſigh which breathed from her ladyſhip's boſom, and that of Thaddeus, as they ſat down, made a cold ſhiver run from the head to the foot of Miſs Beaufort. The ſurprize that Mary felt at the meaning of this emotion, cauſed a ſecond tremor, and with a palpitating heart, ſhe aſked herſelf a few queſtions.

Could this intereſting young man, whom every perſon of ſenſe appeared to eſteem and reſpect, could he fully his virtues by participating in a paſſion with a married woman? No; it was impoſſible.

Notwithſtanding this deciſion, ſhe determined to obſerve him narrowly; and be well convinced of his worth before ſhe permitted him to augment the ſhare of regard which he already poſſeſſed in her boſom.

With

With her head full of these reflections, she awaited the farce, without observing when it appeared. Indeed none present, knew any thing about this piece, (to see which they had professedly come to the theatre,) excepting Miss Egerton, whose ever merry spirits had enjoyed the humour of *Totum* in the play, and now laughed heartily, though unaccompanied, through the ridiculous whims of the farce.

Nothing that passed, could totally disengage the mind of the Count from those remembrances which the recent drama had awakened. When the melting voice of Lady Sara, in whispers, tried to recall his attention; by a start only, he evinced his recollection of not being alone. However, he felt the kindness of her motive; and exerted himself: by the time that the curtain dropt, he had so far rallied his spirits as to attend to the civility of seeing the ladies safe out of the theatre.

Miss Egerton, laughing, as he assisted her into the carriage, said, "I verily believe, Mr. Constantine, had I glanced round during the play, I should have seen

as

as pretty a lacrymal ſcene between you and Lady Sara, as any on the ſtage. I won't have this flirting! I declare I will tell Captain Roos ——."

She continued talking; but he, turning about to offer his ſervice to Miſs Beaufort, heard no more.

Miſs Beaufort felt ſtrangely; ſhe felt cold and reſerved; and, undeſignedly, ſhe appeared what ſhe felt. There was a grave dignity in her air, accompanied with a collectedneſs and ſtillneſs in her before animated countenance, which aſtoniſhed and chilled Thaddeus, though ſhe bowed her head, and gave him her hand to put her into the coach.

In their way home, Miſs Egerton ran over the merits of the play and farce; rallied Thaddeus on the "*tall Pole*," which ſhe threatened ſhould be his epithet whenever he offended her; and then flying from ſubject to ſubject, talked herſelf and her hearers ſo weary, that they mutually rejoiced when the carriage ſtopped in Groſvenor-place.

After

After they had ſeverally paid their reſpects to Lady Tinemouth, who being indiſpoſed, was lying along the ſofa, ſhe deſired Thaddeus to draw a chair near to her.

"I want to learn," ſaid ſhe, "what you think of our Engliſh theatre?"

"Prithee, don't aſk him!" cried Miſs Egerton, pouring out a glaſs of wine, "we have ſeen a tremendous brother Pole of his, who I believe has '*hopped off*' with all his ſpirits! Why, he has been looking as rueful as a half-drowned man, all the night; and, for Lady Sara, and, I could ſwear, Miſs Beaufort too, they have been two Niobe's, '*all tears*.' So good folks, I muſt drink better health to you, to ſave myſelf from the vapours."

"What is all this, Mr. Conſtantine?" aſked the Counteſs, addreſſing Thaddeus, whoſe eyes were now fixed with grateful ſurpriſe on the bluſhing, though diſpleaſed face of Miſs Beaufort.

"My weakneſs," replied he, ſighing, and turning to her ladyſhip: "The play relates to a native of Poland; one, who, like myſelf, an exile in a ſtrange land, is

ſubjected

ſubjected to ſufferings and contumelies, which the braveſt ſpirits may find hard to bear. Any man may combat miſery; but even the moſt intrepid will ſhrink from inſult. This, I believe, is the ſum of the ſtory. Its reſemblance, in ſome points to my own, affected me; and," added he, looking gratefully at Lady Sara, and timidly towards Miſs Beaufort; "if theſe ladies have ſympathized with feelings, which I ſtrove, but could not entirely conceal, I owe to it, the ſweeteſt conſolation, that is now in the power of fate to beſtow!"

"Poor Conſtantine!" cried Maria Egerton, patting his head with one hand. whilſt with the other ſhe wiped a tear from her always ſmiling eye, "forgive me, if I have hurt you. I like you vaſtly, though I muſt now and then laugh at you: you know I hate diſmals; ſo let this tune enliven us all!" and flying to her piano, ſhe played and ſung two or three merry airs, till the Counteſs commanded her back to ſupper.

At

At this moſt ſociable repaſt of the whole day, cheerfulneſs ſeemed again to diſperſe the gloom that threatened the circle. Thaddeus ſet the example. His unreſtrained and elegant converſation, acquired renewed intereſt from the anguiſh he had driven back to his heart; like other beds through which a ſtream flows, it imparted an undeſcribable touchingneſs and poignancy to his ſentiments and manner.

Mary now beheld him in his real character. Unmoleſted by the haughty preſence of Miſs Dundas, he became unreſerved, intelligent, and enchanting. He was maſter of every ſubject; and diſcourſed on all, with a grace which corroborated her "*waking viſions*," that he was, as ſome "*archangel ruined.*"

With the increaſe of Miſs Beaufort's admiration of the Count's fine talents, ſhe gradually loſt the recollection of what had occupied her mind relative to Lady Sara; and her own beautiful countenance dilating into confidence and delight,

light, the evening paſſed away with pleaſure, till the little party ſeparated for their ſeveral homes.

Lady Tinemouth and Maria were faſcinated by the lovely Miſs Beaufort. Miſs Beaufort was equally pleaſed with the Counteſs and her friend; but when ſhe thought on Thaddeus, ſhe was ſurprized, intereſted, charmed.

Lady Sara Roos's reflections, were not leſs flattering: ſhe dwelt with redoubled paſſion on that look from the Count's eyes, that touch of his hand; which ſhe thought were ſigns of a reciprocal flame. Both actions were forgotten by him the moment they were committed; yet he was not ungrateful, but whilſt he acknowedged her attentions, and aſſented to the lovelineſs of her form, he felt that ſhe would lead him to the brink of a precipice, where, if he fell, he muſt ſink to a depth, never to riſe again.

He ſought a refuge from ſuch dangerous meditation, in the idea of the ingenuous Mary, on whoſe modeſt countenance, Virtue ſeemed to have '*ſet her ſeal.*'

Whilſt

Whilſt thus recollecting the pitying kindneſs of her voice and looks, his heart owned the empire of purity; and in the contemplation of her unaffected excellence, he ſoon forgot the witcheries of Lady Sara and her love.

CHAP. III.

NEXT morning, when Thaddeus, according to cuſtom, approached the General's bed to give him his coffee, he found him feveriſh, and his intellects more than uſually unſettled.

The Count awaited with anxiety the arrival of the benevolent Cavendiſh, whom he expected; and when he appeared, he expreſſed his encreaſed alarm. Dr. Cavendiſh having felt the patient's pulſe, expreſſed a wiſh that he could be induced to take a little exerciſe. Thaddeus had often urged this neceſſity to his friend; and having met with conſtant refuſals, he hopleſsly repeated the entreaty now; when, to his ſurprize and ſatisfaction, the old man inſtantly conſented.

Having ſeen him comfortably dreſſed, (for the Count attended to theſe *minutiæ* with the care of a ſon) the doctor ſaid, they

they muſt ride with him to Hyde Park, where he would put them out to walk till he had performed a viſit to a ſick perſon in Piccadilly, after which he would return, and take them home.

The General not only expreſſed pleaſure at the drive,; but, as the air felt warm and balmy, (it being about the beginning of June), made no objection to the propoſed walk.

He admired the Park, the Serpentine River, the cottage on its bank, and ſeemed highly diverted by the horſemen and carriages in the ring. The pertinency of his remarks, affording Thaddeus a ray of hope that his ſenſes had not entirely loſt their union with reaſon, he was contemplating with awakened confidence what might be the happy effects of conſtant exerciſe, when the General's complaints of wearineſs, obliged him to ſtop near Piccadilly gate, and await the arrival of the doctor's coach.

He was ſtanding againſt the railing, ſupporting Butzou; and, with his hat in his hand, ſhading his friend's face from

from the ſun; when, two or three carriages driving in, he met the eyes of Miſs Euphemia Dundas; who, pulling the check-ſtring, cried out, "Bleſs me, Mr. Conſtantine! Who expected to ſee you here? Why your note told us, that you were confined with a ſick friend."

Thaddeus bowed to her, and, ſtill ſuſtaining the debilitated frame of the General on his arm, advanced to the ſide of the coach. Miſs Beaufort, who now looked out, and expreſſed her hope that his invalid was better.

"This is the friend I mentioned," ſaid the Count, turning his eyes on the mild features of Butzou; "his phyſician having ordered him to walk, I accompanied him here."

"Dear me! How ill you look, Sir," cried Euphemia, addreſſing the poor invalid; "but you are attended by a kind friend."

"My dear lord!" exclaimed the old man, not regarding what ſhe ſaid, "I muſt go home; call the carriage; you know I am wanted."

Euphemia was again opening her mouth to ſpeak, but Miſs Beaufort perceiving a look of diſtreſs in the expreſſive features of Mr. Conſtantine, interrupted her by ſaying, "Good morning, Mr. Conſtantine; I know we detain you, and oppreſs that gentleman, whoſe pardon we ought to beg." She bowed her head, with an expreſſion of reſpectful commiſeration beaming from her eyes upon the General, whoſe white hairs were blowing about his face as he attempted to pull the Count back to the pathway.

"My friend cannot thank you, kind Miſs Beaufort," cried Thaddeus with a look of gratitude, that made her bluſh, "but I do from my heart!"

"Here it is! Pray, my Lord, come along!" cried Butzou: Thaddeus ſeeing that his information was right, bowed to the ladies; and their carriage drove off.

Though the wheels of Lady Dundas's coach rolled away from the retreating figures of Thaddeus and his friend, the images of both, occupied the meditations of

of Euphemia and Miſs Beaufort, whilſt *tête-à-tête*, and in ſilence, they made the circuit of the Park.

When the carriage again paſſed the ſpot on which the ſubject of their thoughts had ſtood, Mary, almoſt mechanically, looked out of the window, towards the gate.

"Is he gone yet?" aſked Euphemia, ſighing deeply.

Mary drew in her head, with the quickneſs of conſcious guilt; and, whilſt a colour ſtained her face, that of itſelf might have betrayed her prevarication, ſhe aſked, "Who?"

"Mr. Conſtantine," replied Euphemia, with a ſecond ſigh, "Did you remark, Mary, how gracefully he ſupported that ſick old gentleman? Was it not the perſonification of Youth upholding the fainting ſteps of Age? He put me in mind of the charming young prince, whoſe name I forget, leading the old Beliſarius."

"You are an enthuſiaſt, Euphemia!" returned Mary, ſtriving to ſmile, and wondering within herſelf, what could be

the

the meaning of thoſe appellations with which the old man had addreſſed Thaddeus.

"So all tell me," replied Euphemia; "ſo all ſay, who neither poſſeſs the ſenſibility nor the candour to allow, that great merit may exiſt without being aſſociated with great rank. Yet," cried the little beauty, in a more animated tone, "I have my doubts, Mary, of his being what he ſeems. Did you obſerve the ſick gentleman call him *my lord*?"

"I did," returned Mary, "and I was not ſurprized. Such manners as Mr. Conſtantine's, are not be acquired in a cottage."

"Dear, dear Mary;" cried Euphemia, flinging her ivory arms round her neck; "how I love you for theſe words! you are generous, you think nobly, and I will no longer heſitate to—to—" and breaking off, ſhe hid her head in Miſs Beaufort's boſom.

Mary's heart throbbed, her cheeks grew pale, and ſhe felt a ſecret wiſh to ſtop the tide of Miſs Dundas's confidence.

"Dear Euphemia," anſwered ſhe, "your regard for this intereſting exile is very praiſe-worthy. But beware of——" ſhe heſitated; a conſcious twitch in her own breaſt, ſtayed the warning that was riſing to her tongue; and, bluſhing at a motive which ſhe could not at the inſtant aſſign to friendſhip, ſelfiſhneſs, or envy, ſhe touched the cheek of Euphemia with her quivering lips.

Euphemia had finiſhed the ſentence for her, and raiſing her head, exclaimed: "What ſhould I fear in eſteeming Mr. Conſtantine? Is he not the moſt captivating creature in the world? And for his beauty! Oh, Mary, he is ſo beautiful, that when the library is filled with the handſomeſt men about town, the moment Conſtantine enters, their reign is over. I compare them with his godlike figure, and I feel as one looking at the ſun; all other objects appear dim and ſhapeleſs."

"I hope," returned Mary, rubbing her forehead with her hand, her head beginning to ache ſtrangely, "that Mr. Conſtantine

ſtantine does not owe your friendſhip to his fine perſon? I think his mental qualities are more deſerving ſuch a gift."

"Don't look ſo ſevere, dear Mary!" cried Miſs Dundas, obſerving that ſhe caſt down her eyes, with a contracting brow; "are you diſpleaſed with me?"

Mary's diſpleaſure was at the auſterity of her own words, and not at her auditor. Raiſing her eyes with a ſmile both in them and on her lips, ſhe ſaid, "I do not mean, my dear girl, to be ſevere; but I would wiſh, for the honour of my ſex, that the objects which attract either our love or our compaſſion, ſhould have ſomething more precious than mere perſonal beauty, to engage our intereſt."

"Well, I ſhall ſoon be ſatisfied!" cried Euphemia in a gayer tone, as they drove through Groſvenor gate; "We all know that Conſtantine is ſenſible and accompliſhed: He writes poetry like an angel, both in French and Italian: I have hundreds of mottoes compoſed by him; one of them, Mary, is on that work-box I gave

you yesterday: and what is more, I will ask him to-morrow, why that old gentleman called him *my lord?* If he be a lord!" exclaimed she.

"What then?" inquired the eloquent eyes of Mary.

"Don't look so impertinent, my dear," cried the now animated beauty, "I positively won't say another word to you to-day."

Miss Beaufort's head-ache had become so painful, that she felt relieved when Euphemia ceased, and the carriage drew up to Lady Dundas's door.

A night of almost unremitted sleep, performed such good effects on the frame and intellects of General Butzou, that the ever-anxious Thaddeus received with pleasure the opinion of Doctor Cavendish, that he was so much better, as to allow them room to hope the best consequences from a constant repetition of the same air and exercise. Accordingly, after the ride and walk had been repeated the following day, the Count

left his friend to his maps and little Nanny, and once more took the way to Harley-ſtreet.

He found only Miſs Dundas and her ſiſter in the ſtudy. Mary (againſt her will, which ſhe oppoſed becauſe it was her will,) had gone out a ſhopping with Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet and Lady Dundas.

Miſs Dundas left the room the moment ſhe had finiſhed her leſſons.

Euphemia, delighted at being *tête à tête* with Thaddeus, forgot that ſhe was to act the faſcinating character of Madame d'Arblay's heroine; and, ſhutting her book the inſtant Diana diſappeared, all at once opened her attack on his confidence.

To the eager queſtions, which the few words of the General had excited, the Count afforded no other reply, than the information, that his poor friend knew not what he ſaid, having been a long time in a ſtate of mental derangement.

This explanation cauſed a momentary mortification in the fanciful Euphemia; but,

as it was a property of her mind, to erect a new airy caſtle immediately on the ſinking of the old, ſhe ſoon rallied, and embraced the ſuppoſition, that he "might be a Duke, which was more than a Lord!" at any rate, let him be what he would, he charmed her, and had much ado to parry the increaſing boldneſs of her ſpeeches, without letting her ſee that they were underſtood.

"You are very diffident, Conſtantine;" cried ſhe, looking down, "If *I* conſider you worthy of my friendſhip, why ſhould *you* make diſqualifying aſſertions?"

"Every man, Madam," returned Thaddeus bowing as he roſe from his chair, "muſt feel himſelf diffident of deſerving the honour of your notice."

"There is no man living," replied ſhe bluſhing, "to whom I would offer my friendſhip but yourſelf."

Thaddeus bit his lip; he knew not what to anſwer; bowing a ſecond time, he ſtretched out his hand, and drew his hat towards him. Euphemia's eyes followed the movement.

"You

"You are in a prodigious haſte, Mr. Conſtantine!"

"I feel that I intrude, Madam; and I have promiſed to be with my ſick friend at an early hour."

"Well, you may go, ſince you are obliged;" returned the pretty Euphemia, riſing up, and ſmiling ſweetly as ſhe laid one hand on his arm, and put the other into her tucker: ſhe drew out a little white leather *ſouvenir*, marked on the back in gold letters, with the words '*Toujour cher*,' and ſlipping it into his hand, "There, receive that Conſtantine; and retain it as the firſt pledge of Euphemia Dundas's friendſhip."

Thaddeus coloured as he took it; and again having recourſe to the convenient reply of a bow, left the room, quite overcome with vexation.

There was an indelicacy in this abſolutely wooing conduct of Miſs Euphemia, that, notwithſtanding her beauty, and the ſoftneſs which was its vehicle, ſtruck him with the deepeſt diſguſt. He could not trace real affection, either in her words or man-

ner; and, that any woman, inſtigated by a mere whim, ſhould lay aſide the decent reſerves of her ſex, and actually court his regard, ſurpriſed, whilſt it impelled him, to loath her.

They who adopt Euphemia's ſentiments, are little aware of the concluſion which ſociety deduce from ſuch intemperate behaviour. That miſtaken creature, who, either at the impulſe of her own diſpoſition, or the mandates of example, is led to throw off the veil of modeſty, literally '*forſakes the guide of her youth*,' and leaves herſelf open to every attack which man can deviſe againſt virtue. By levelling the barrier raiſed by nature, ſhe herſelf expoſes the hold of her peace; and may find too late for recovery, that what modeſty has abandoned, is not long held by honour.

Euphemia's affected attachment, ſuggeſted to the Count, a few unpleaſant recollections reſpecting the fervent and unequivocal paſſion of Lady Sara. Though guilty, it ſprung from a head-long ardour of diſpoſition, which formed at once the error and its palliation. He ſaw that love

was

was not welcomed by her, (at leaſt he thought ſo,) as a play thing, but ſtruggled with as a foe; he had witneſſed her tortures, he pityed them; and, to render her happy, would gladly have made any ſacrifice ſhort of his future tranquillity. Too well aſſured, of being all the world to Lady Sara; the belief, that Miſs Euphemia liked him only from idleneſs, caprice, and contradiction, cauſed him to repay her overtures, with decided contempt.

When he arrived at home, he threw the pocket-book, whoſe unambiguous motto made him laugh at her and himſelf, into a drawer, and looking round his humble room, whoſe wicker chairs, oil-clothed floor, and uncurtained windows, announced any thing but ſplendor; "Poor Euphemia!" thought he, "how would you be diſmayed, were the indigent Conſtantine really to take you at your word, and bring you home to ſuch a cheerleſs habitation!"

The repetition of the late ſcene, which was communicated to Miſs Beaufort from Euphemia, failed in producing a ſimilar effect on her.

Mary could discover no reason why the old gentleman's mental derangement should dignify his friend with titles that he had never borne. She remarked, that his answer to Euphemia appeared evasive; she remembered his emotion and apology on seeing Mr. C. Kemble in *Adelbert;* and, uniting, with these facts, his manners, and acquirements so far beyond the charges of a vulgar education, she could retain no doubt of his being at least well born.

This mysterious Constantine, occupied her hourly thoughts during the space of two months; in which time, she had full opportunity to learn much of a character with whom she associated almost every day. At Lady Tinemouth's, (one of whose evening guests she frequently became,) she beheld him disrobed of that armour of reserve, which was his best repellant against the rude attacks in Harley-street.

In the house of the Countess, Mary saw him welcomed like a certain idolized being, before whose cheering influence, all frowns and clouds must disappear. When he entered

tered, the ſmile reſumed its ſeat on the languid features of Lady Tinemouth; Miſs Egerton's eye, lighted up to keener archneſs; Lady Sara's voluptuous orbs floated in pleaſure; and for Mary herſelf, her breaſt heaved, her cheeks glowed, her hands trembled, a quick ſigh eſcaped her boſom; and whilſt ſhe remained in his preſence, ſhe believed that happineſs had loſt its uſual evaneſcent property, and had become tangible, to hold and preſs upon the heart.

Mary, who queſtioned the cauſe of theſe tremors on her pillow; bedewed it with delicious though bitter tears, when her alarmed ſoul whiſpered, that ſhe felt for this amiable foreigner, '*a ſomething than friendſhip dearer.*'

"Ah! is it to come to this?" cried ſhe, preſſing down her ſaturated eye-lids with her hand, "am I at laſt to love a man, who perhaps never caſts a thought on me? How deſpicable ſhall I become in my own eyes!"

The pride of woman, puts this charge to her taken heart: that heart, which ſeems

tempered of the pureſt clay, and warmed with the fire of Heaven; that tender and diſintereſted heart, makes as its appeal.—What is love? Is it not an admiration of all that is beautiful in nature and morality? Is it not a union of lovelineſs with truth? Is it not a paſſion, whoſe ſole object is the rapture of contemplating the ſupreme beauty of this combined character?

"Where then," cried the enthuſiaſtic Mary, wiping the tears from her cheek, "where is the ſhame that can be annexed to my loving Conſtantine? If it be honourable to love delineated excellence; it muſt be equally ſo, to love it when embodied in a human ſhape. Such it is in Conſtantine: and if love be the reflected light of virtue, I may ceaſe to arraign myſelf of what I otherwiſe would have ſcorned. Therefore, Conſtantine," cried ſhe, raiſing her claſped hands, whilſt renewed tears ſtreamed over her face, "I will love thee! I will pray for thy happineſs, though its partner ſhould be Euphemia Dundas!"

Mary's

Mary's eager imagination, would not allow her to perceive thoſe obſtacles, in the ſhapes of pride and prudence, which would ſtand in the way of his obtaining Euphemia's hand; its light, ſhewed to her, only a rival, in the perſon of the little beauty; from whoſe direct confidence ſhe afterwards retreated with abhorrence.

Had Euphemia been more deſerving of Conſtantine, Miſs Beaufort believed ſhe would have felt leſs reluctant to hear that ſhe alſo loved him. But Mary could not avoid ſeeing, that Miſs E. Dundas poſſeſſed little to enſure comfort, if mere beauty and accidental flights of good-humour, were not admitted into the ſcale. She was weak in underſtanding, timid of principle, abſurd in almoſt every ſentiment ſhe adopted; and, as for love, true, dignified, reſpectable love, ſhe knew nothing of the feeling.

Whilſt Miſs Beaufort meditated on this meagre ſchedule of her rival's merits, the probability that even ſuch a man as Conſtantine, might ſacrifice himſelf to flattery and ſplendour, ſtung her to the ſoul.

The

The more ſhe reflected on it, the more ſhe conceived it likely. Euphemia was conſidered a beauty of the day; her affectation of refined prettineſſes, pleaſed many, and might charm Conſtantine: ſhe was miſtreſs of fifty thouſand pounds; and did not eſteem it neceſſary to conceal from her favourite, the empire he had acquired. Perhaps there was generoſity in this openneſs? If ſo, what might it not effect on a grateful diſpoſition? Or rather, (her mortified heart, murmured in the words of her aunt Dorothy;) How might it not operate on the mind of one of that ſex, which at the beſt, is equally moved by caprice, as ſentiment!

Mary bluſhed at her appropriation of this opinion; and, angry with herſelf, for the injuſtice which a lurking jealouſy had induced her to throw on Conſtantine's noble nature, ſhe reſolved, whatever were her ſtruggles, to promote his happineſs to the utmoſt of her power.

The next morning, when Miſs Beaufort opened the ſtudy door, ſhe found Mr. Conſtantine at his ſtation, literally baited between.

between Miſs Dundas and her honourable lover. At ſuch moments, Mary always appeared the kindeſt of the kind. She loved to ſee Conſtantine ſmile; and, whenever ſhe could produce that effect, by turning the ſpleen of theſe polite ſneerers againſt themſelves, the ſmiles which entered her heart afforded a banquet for hours, after his departure.

Mary drew out her work, (which was a purſe that ſhe was netting for Lady Tinemouth;) and, taking a ſeat beſide Thaddeus, ſtrove, along with Euphemia, to occupy his attention entirely, that he might not catch even one of thoſe inſolent glances, which were paſſing from Laſcelles, and a new ally, whom he had obtained in the pretty Lady Villiers.

This lady ſeemed to take extreme pleaſure in accoſting Thaddeus by the appellation of "friend, my good man, Mr. what's your name?" and ſimilar ſquibs of inſult, with which the proſperous aſſail the unfortunate. Such random ſhots often inflict the moſt galling wounds.

However,

However, *friend*, *my good man*, and *Mr. what's your name*, disappointed this lady's small artillery of effect. He seemed invulnerable, both to her insolence, and to her affectation; for to be admired by even Miss Dundas's contemned tutor, was not to be despised; though at the very moment, she supposed her haughtiness had impressed him with a high sense of his own meanness, and a high conception of her dignity.

She jumped about the room; assumed infantine airs, played with Euphemia's lap-dog, fondled it, seated herself on the floor, and swept the carpet with her fine flaxen tresses: But she performed the whole routine of captivation in vain: Thaddeus recollected having seen this pretty full-grown baby, in her appropriate character of a profligate wife, pawning her own and her husband's property; he remembered this, and the united shafts of her charms and folly, fell unnoticed to the ground.

When Thaddeus took his leave, Miss Beaufort, as was her custom, retired for an hour to read in her dressing room, before she

ſhe directed her attention to the toilet. She opened a book, and ran over a few pages of Lord St. Alban; but his reaſoning was too abſtracted for her preſent frame of mind, and ſhe threw the volume down.

She dipped a pen in the ink-ſtand. Being a letter in debt to her guardian, ſhe thought ſhe could defray it now. She accompliſhed "Dear Sir," and ſtopped. Whilſt ſhe reſted on her elbow, and heedleſs of what ſhe was doing, bit the feather of her quill to pieces, no other idea offered itſelf, than the figure of Thaddeus, ſitting '*ſevere in youthful beauty!*' She ſaw him ſurrounded by thoſe contumelies which the unworthy beſtow on the merit they can neither emulate nor overlook.

Uneaſy with herſelf, ſhe puſhed the table away; and, leaning her cheek on her arm, gazed into the rainbow varieties of a beau-pot of flowers which occupied the fire-place. Even their gay colours appeared to fade before her ſight, and preſent to her vacant eye, the form of Thaddeus, with the melancholy air that ſhaded his movements.

She

She turned round, but ſhe could not diſengage herſelf from the ſpirit that was within her: his half-ſuppreſſed ſighs, ſeemed yet to thrill in her ear, and weigh on her heart.

"Excellent young man!" cried ſhe, ſtarting up, "why are you ſo wretched? O! Lady Tinemouth, why have you told me ſo much of his virtues? Why have I convinced myſelf, that what you ſaid is true? Oh! why was I formed to love ſuperior goodneſs?"

The natural reply to theſe ſelf-demanded queſtions, ſuggeſting itſelf, ſhe aſſented with a tear to the whiſperings of her feelings, that when philoſophy would baniſh the affections, it is incapable of filling their place.

She rung the bell for her maid.

"Marſhall, who dines with Lady Dundas to-day?"

"I believe Ma'am," replied the girl, "Mr. Laſcelles, Lady Villiers, and the Marquis of Eleſmere."

"I deteſt them all three!" cried Mary, with a petulance to which ſhe was little liable;

liable; "dreſs me how you like, I am indifferent to my appearance."

Marſhall obeyed the commands of her lady, who bent her eyes on a little volume of poems written by Egerton Brydges, till her maid having fixed the laſt pearl comb in her beautiful hair, exclaimed, "Dear Ma'am, you are ſo pale to day! ſhall I put on the leaſt bit of rouge?"

No," returned Mary, glancing a look over her languid features, "no, Marſhall, I appear as well as I deſire. Any chance of paſſing unnoticed in company I deſpiſe, is worth retaining. No one will be here, this evening, that I care to pleaſe."

She was miſtaken; other company had been invited beſides them whom the maid had mentioned; and Miſs Beaufort continued from ſeven o'clock till ten, the period at which the ladies left the table, annoyed to death by the inſipid and pert compliments of the men.

Sick of their ſubjectleſs and dragging converſation, ſhe gladly followed Lady Dundas to the drawing-room; where, opening her netting caſe, ſhe took her ſtation

tion beneath one of the luſtres in a remote corner, hoping to find a retreat from the ceaſeleſs nonſenſe of her ladyſhip's gueſts.

After half an hour had elapſed, the gentlemen from below, recruited by freſh company, thronged in faſt; and, notwithſtanding it was ſtiled a family party, Miſs Beaufort ſaw many ſtrange faces, amongſt whom ſhe obſerved an old clergyman, who was looking about for a chair. The yawning Laſcelles threw himſelf along the only vacant ſofa, juſt as the gentleman approached.

Miſs Beaufort immediately reſigned her place, and was moving on to another room, when the coxcomb ſpringing up, begged permiſſion to admire her work; and taking it from her, purſued her, twiſting the purſe into a rope round his fingers, declaring how pretty it was, whilſt he thruſt, (in his own opinion,) his pretty hand into her eyes.

Mary walked forward, ſmiling with contempt, till they reached the painted ſaloon; where the Miſs Dundas's were cloſely engaged in converſation with the Marquis of Eleſmere.

Laſcelles,

Lascelles, who trembled for his Golconda, at this sight, stepped briskly up. Mary, who did not wish to lose sight of her purse, whilst in the power of such a *Lothario*, followed him, and placed herself against the arm of the sofa on which Euphemia sat.

Lascelles, now bowed his scented locks to Diana in vain. Lord Elesmere was describing the last heat at Newmarket, and the attention of neither lady could be drawn aside.

The beau became so irritated by the perfect neglect of Euphemia, and so nettled at her sister's overlooking him, that, assuming a gay air, he struck Miss Dundas's arm a smart stroke with Miss Beaufort's purse; and laughing, to shew the strong opposition between his broad white teeth, and the miserable mouth of his lordly rival; hoped to alarm him by his familiarity, and to obtain a triumph over the ladies, by degrading them in the eyes of the peer.

"Miss Dundas," demanded he, "who the devil was that, your sister walked with the other day in Portland Place.?"

"Me?"

"Me!" cried Euphemia, ſurprized.

"Aye," returned he, "I was croſſing from Weymouth-ſtreet, when I perceived you accoſt a ſtrange looking man. You may remember, you ſauntered with him as far as Sir William Miller's. I would have joined you, but ſeeing the family ſtanding in the balcony, I did not chuſe them to ſuppoſe, that perhaps *I* brought you into ſuch low company."

"Who was it, Euphemia?" enquired Miſs Dundas, in a ſevere tone.

"I wonder he affects to be ignorant," anſwered her ſiſter, angrily, "he knows very well, it was only Mr. Conſtantine."

"And who is Mr. Conſtantine?" demanded the marquis. Mr. Laſcelles ſhrugged his ſhoulders.

"E'faith, my lord! a fellow that nobody knows; a teacher of languages, giving himſelf the airs of a prince. A writer of poetry; and a man who will draw you, your houſe, and dogs, if you will pay him for it."

Mary's heart ſwelled.

"What,

"What, a French emigrant?" drawled his lordſhip, dropping his lip; "and the lovely Euphemia wiſhes to ſoothe his ſorrows."

"No, my lord," ſtammered Euphemia, "he is—he is——"

"What!" interrupted Laſcelles, with a malicious grin, "a wandering beggar; that thruſts himſelf into a ſociety, which may ſome day repay his inſolence with chaſtiſement! For thoſe who encourage him, they had better beware of being ſcouted by the world. I underſtand that his chief protectreſs, is Lady Tinemouth; and, by way of an auxilliary, Lady Sara Roos evinces that ſhe is not quite inconſolable at the abſence of her huſband."

Mary, pale and trembling, at the ſcandal his laſt words would have inſinuated, had opened her lips to ſpeak, when Miſs Dundas (whoſe angry eyes darted from her ſiſter to her lover), exclaimed, "Mr. Laſcelles, I know not what you mean. The ſubject you have taken up, is below my diſcuſſion; yet, I muſt confeſs, if Euphemia

phemia ever have disgraced herself so far as to be seen walking with a school-master, she deserves all you have said."

"And why might I not walk with him, sister?" asked the poor culprit, suddenly recovering from her confusion, and looking pertly up, "who knew that he was not a gentleman?"

"Every body, ma'am," interrupted Lascelles; "and when a young woman of fashion condescends to be seen equalizing herself with any creature depending on his wits for support, she is very likely to incur the contempt of her acquaintance, and the censure of her friends."

"She is, Sir," said Mary, holding down her indignant heart, and forcing her countenance to appear serene; "for she ought to know, that those men of fashion, who have no wits, either to be their support or ornament, if they did not proscribe talents from their circle, must soon find "*the greater glory dim the less.*"

"True, Madam," cried Lord Berrington, who, having entered during the

contest,

conteſt, had ſtood unobſerved till this moment; "and that gold and title, will prove mere droſs and bubble, when ſtruck by the Ithuriel touch of Genius."

Mary turned round at the ſound of his philanthropic voice, and gave him one of thoſe glances which go immediately to the ſoul.

"Come, Miſs Beaufort," cried he, taking her hand, "I ſee the young muſician, yonder, who has ſo recently aſtoniſhed the public. I believe he is going to ſing." Let us leave this ill-natured corner, and ſeek harmony by his ſide.

Mary obeyed the impulſe of his arm, and ſeating herſelf a few paces off the muſical party, Berrington took his ſtation behind her chair.

When the fineſt, and moſt melting voice in the world, had ceaſed the laſt ſtanza of "*From ſhades of night;*" Mary's eyes, full of admiration, and, a feeling which rapid aſſociation rendered more intenſe, remained fixed on the ſinger: Lord Berrington ſmiled at the vivid expreſſion of her countenance; and, as the inimitable Braham moved from the inſtrument, ex-

claimed, " Come, come, Miſs Beaufort, I won't allow that Orphean boy to run away with all your attention; liſten to my merits. Do you know, if it were not for my timely lectures, little Laſcelles would grow the moſt inſufferable goſſip about town? There is not a match, nor a divorce near St. James's, of which he cannot repeat to you all the whys and wherefores. I call him Sir Benjamin Backbite; and I believe he hates me worſe than the devil."

" Such a man's diſlike," rejoined Mary, " is the higheſt encomium he can beſtow. I never yet heard him ſpeak well of a perſon who did not reſemble himſelf."

" And he is not conſiſtently generous even there," reſumed the viſcount; " I am not ſure, that I have always heard him ſpeak in the gentleſt terms of Miſs Dundas. Yet, on this topic, I cannot quite blame him; for, on my honour, ſhe provokes me beyond any woman I know."

" Many women," replied Mary, ſmiling, " would eſteem that a flattering inſtance of power."

" And,

"And, like every thing that flatters," returned he, "it would tell a falsehood. A shrew can provoke the man who detests her. And for Miss Dundas," continued he, "notwithstanding her parade of learning, her judgment has not been taught to decide rightly; consequently she generally espouses the wrong side of the argument; and I may say, with somebody whose name I have forgotten, that any one who knows Diana Dundas, never need be at a loss for a woman to call impertinent."

"You are not usually so severe, my lord!"

"I am not usually so sincere, Miss Beaufort," answered he, "but I see that you think for yourself; therefore I make no hesitation in speaking what *I* think—to you."

Mary bowed her head. Lady Dundas at that moment beckoned him across the room. She compelled him to sit down to whist. He cast a rueful glance at Mary, and took a seat opposite his costly partner.

"That is a very worthy young man," obſerved the old clergyman, to whom Miſs Beaufort, at the beginning of the evening, had reſigned her chair; "I preſume, Madam, you have been honouring him with your converſation."

"Yes," returned Mary, noticing the benign countenance of the venerable ſpeaker; "I have not had the pleaſure of long knowing Lord Berrington, but what I have ſeen of his character is highly to his advantage."

"I was intimate in his father's houſe for years," rejoined the gentleman; "I knew his lordſhip from a boy. If he have faults, he owes them to his mother, who doated on him, and rather directed his care to the adornment of a really handſome perſon, than to the cultivation of talents, which he has ſince learnt to appreciate."

"I believe Lord Berrington to be very ſenſible, and, above all, very humane;" returned Mary.

"He is ſo," replied the old gentleman; "yet, it was not till he had attained the age

age of twenty-two, that he appeared to know that he had any thing to do in the world, beſides dreſſing, and attending on the fair. His taſte directed the firſt, whilſt the urbanity of his diſpoſition gave birth to the latter. When Berrington arrived at his title, he was about five-and-twenty. Sorrow for the death of his amiable parents, who died in the ſame month, afforded him leiſure to find his reaſon. He diſcovered that he had been acting a part beneath him; and he ſoon implanted on the old ſtock, thoſe excellent acquirements of the mind, which you ſee he poſſeſſes. In ſpite of this regeneration," continued he, caſting a good-humoured glance on the dove-coloured ſilk ſtockings, breeches, and waiſtcoat of the viſcount; "you perceive firſt impreſſions will remain. He loves dreſs, but he loves juſtice and philanthropy better."

"This eulogy, Sir," ſaid Mary, "affords me real pleaſure. May I know the name of the gentleman with whom I have the honour of converſing?"

"My name is Blackmore," returned he.

"Dr. Blackmore?"

"The ſame."

He was the ſame Dr. Blackmore, whoſe humanity had been ſtruck with the appearance of the Count Sobieſki at the Hummums; and who, being a rare viſitor at Lady Dundas's, had never, by any chance, met a ſecond time with the object of his compaſſion.

"I am happy," reſumed Miſs Beaufort, "in having the good fortune to meet a gentleman, of whom I have ſo frequently heard my guardian expreſs his ſentiments of eſteem."

"Ah!" replied he, "I have not ſeen him ſince the death of his lady; I hope that he and his ſon are well?"

"Perfectly," returned ſhe.

"You, Madam, I ſuppoſe, are my lady's niece, Miſs Beaufort?"

"I am, Sir."

"Well, I rejoice at this incident," rejoined he, preſſing her hand; "I knew your mother when ſhe was a lovely girl.

She

She uſed to ſpend her ſummers with the late Lady Somerſet, then Miſs Beaufort, at the caſtle. It was there I had the honour of cultivating her friendſhip."

"I do not remember ever having ſeen my mother," replied the now thoughtful Mary. Dr. Blackmore, obſerving the expreſſion of her countenance, ſmiled kindly, and ſaid, "I fear I am to blame here. This is a ſad way of beginning an acquaintance to which I introduced myſelf. But your goodneſs muſt pardon me," continued he, "for I have ſo long accuſtomed myſelf to ſpeak what I like, to them I like, that ſometimes, as in this caſe, I undeſignedly inflict pain."

"Not in this caſe," returned Mary; "I ſhall always feel pleaſure in liſtening to a friend of my mother's; and particularly ſo, when he ſpeaks in her praiſe."

The breaking up of the card tables, prevented any further converſation; and Lord Berrington again approaching Miſs Beaufort, exclaimed, as he perceived her companion, "Ah! my good doctor; what, you have preſented yourſelf at this fair ſhrine? I de-

clare, you eccentric folk may dare any thing. Whilſt you are free, Miſs Beaufort," added he, turning to her, "adopt this bit of advice, which a good lady once gave me, and which I have implicitly followed, 'When you are young, get the character of an oddity, and it ſeats you in an eaſy chair for life."

Mary was interrupted in her reply, by a general ſtir amongſt the company; who, now that cards were over, like bees and waſps, were ſwarming about the room, gathering and ſtinging as they paſſed.

At two, the houſe was cleared; and Mary exhauſted, threw herſelf on her pillow, to think, and dream of Thaddeus.

CHAP. V.

IF it be true what the vivid imaginations of poets have often aſſerted, that when the ſoul dreams, it is in the actual preſence of thoſe beings whoſe images preſent themſelves to its ſlumbers, then have the ſpirits of Thaddeus and Mary been commingled at the hour of midnight; then has the young Sobieſki again viſited his diſtant country; again ſeen it victorious; again knelt before his ſainted parent.

From ſuch viſions as theſe, did Thaddeus awake in the morning, after having ſpent the preceding evening with Lady Tinemouth.

He had walked with her ladyſhip in Hyde Park till a late hour. By the mild light of the moon, which ſhone brightly through the ſtill, balmy air of a midſummer night, they took their way twice,

along the ſhadowy bank of the Serpentine.

There is a ſolemn appeal to the ſoul in the repoſe of nature, that "makes itſelf be felt." No ſyllable from either Thaddeus or the Counteſs, broke the univerſal ſilence. Thaddeus looked around, on the clear expanſe of water overſhaded by the long reflexion of the deepening woods: then raiſing his eyes to that beautiful planet, which has excited the tendereſt ſenſations in every feeling breaſt, ſince the beginning of the world; he drew a deep ſigh. The Counteſs echoed it.

"In ſuch a night as this," ſaid Thaddeus, in a low voice, as if afraid to diſturb the ſleeping deity of the place, "I uſed to walk the ramparts of Villanow, with my dear departed mother, and gaze on that lovely orb: when I was far diſtant from her, I have looked at it from the door of my tent, and, fancying that her eyes were then fixed on the ſame object with my own, I found happineſs in the idea."

Thaddeus felt a tear ſtealing down his cheek. That moon yet ſhone brightly, but

but his mother's eyes were closed in the grave.

"Villanow!" repeated the Countess in a tone of surprise, "surely, that was the seat of the brave Palatine of Masovia! You have discovered yourself, Constantine! I am much mistaken, if you be not his grandson, Thaddeus Sobieski?"

Thaddeus had allowed the remembrances pressing on his mind, to draw him into a speech, which he found had disclosed to the quick apprehension of the Countess, what his pride, would for ever have concealed.

"I have indeed betrayed my secret;" cried he, incapable of denying it, "but, dear Lady Tinemouth, as you value my feelings, never let it escape your lips. Having long considered you as my best friend, loved you as a parent, I forgot in the recollection of my beloved mother now no more, that I had withheld any of my history from you."

"Gracious Providence!" exclaimed her ladyship, after a moment's pause, in which ten thousand admiring and pitying reflections thronged on her mind, "Is it possible?

Can it be the Count Sobieſki, that brave and illuſtrious youth, of whom every foreigner ſpoke with wonder? Can it be him, that I behold in the poor unfriended Conſtantine?"

"Even ſo;" returned Thaddeus, preſſing her hand; "my country is no more. I am now forgotten by the world, as I have been by fortune. I have nothing to do on the earth, but to fulfil the few duties which friendſhip has enjoined; and then, it will be indifferent to me how ſoon I am laid in its boſom."

"You are too young, dear Conſtantine, (for I am yet to call you by that name,) to deſpair of happineſs being reſerved for you."

"No, my dear Lady Tinemouth, I do not cheat myſelf with ſuch hope; I am not ſo importunate with the gracious Being who gave me life and reaſon. He beſtowed on me for a while, the tendereſt connexions; a mother, a grandfather, friends, rank, honours, glory: all theſe were cruſhed in the fall of Poland; yet I ſurvive. I only ſeek reſignation, and I have found it:

it coſt me many a ſtruggle; but the conteſt was due to the decrees of that all-wiſe Creator, who gave my firſt years to happineſs."

"Ineſtimable young man!" cried the Counteſs, wiping the flowing tears from her eyes, "you teach misfortune dignity! Not when all Warſaw roſe in a body to thank you as one of its braveſt deliverers; not when the king received you in the ſenate with open arms; could you have appeared to me ſo worthy of admiration, as at this moment, when, conſcious of having been all this, you ſubmit to the bittereſt ſtorms of fate, becauſe you believe them to be the will of your Maker! Ah! little does Miſs Beaufort think, when ſeated by your ſide, that ſhe is converſing with the very hero whom ſhe has ſo often wiſhed to ſee!"

"Miſs Beaufort!" echoed Thaddeus, his heart glowing with delight. "Did ſhe ever hear of me by the name of Sobieſki?"

"Who has not?" returned the Counteſs, "every heart that could be intereſted by ſuffering

ſuffering virtue, has heard, and muſt well remember, the calamities of your country. Whilſt the newſpapers of the day, informed us of the ſtruggles which Poland made for liberty; they noticed amongſt the firſt of her champions, the Palatine of Maſovia, Koſciuſzko, and yourſelf. Many any evening have I ſpent with Lady Somerſet and Mary Beaufort, lamenting the fate of that devoted kingdom."

During this declaration, a variety of tranſporting emotions agitated the mind of Thaddeus; till recollecting with a bitter pang, the ſhameleſs ingratitude of Pembroke, and the cruel poſſibility of being recognized by the Earl of Tinemouth as his ſon; he exclaimed, "My deareſt Madam, I entreat, that what I have revealed to you, may never be divulged! Miſs Beaufort's friendſhip would indeed be happineſs; but I cannot purchaſe even that, at the expence of feelings which are knit with my life."

"How?" cried the Counteſs, "Is not your name, and all its attendant ideas, an honour

honour that the proudeſt man might boaſt?"

Thaddeus preſſed her ladyſhip's hand gratefully to his heart.

"You are kind! very kind! Yet, I cannot retract. Conſide, dear Lady Tinemouth, in the juſtice of my reſolution. I could not bear cold pity; I could not bear the heartleſs comments of people, who, pretending to compaſſion, would load me with a heavier ſenſe of my calamities. Beſides, there are perſons in England, who are ſo much the objects of my averſion, that I would rather die than have them know that I exiſt. Therefore, on theſe grounds, let me implore you to preſerve my ſecret."

Lady Tinemouth ſaw by the earneſtneſs of his manner, that ſhe ought to comply; and, without further heſitation, promiſed all the ſilence on the ſubject which he could require.

This long, moonlight converſation, by awakening thoſe dormant remembrances, which were cheriſhed, though hidden in his boſom, gave birth to an effort of imagination,

tion, that painted within the rapid ſeries of his tumultuous dreams, the images of every being whom he had ever loved, or now continued to regard with intereſt.

Proceeding next morning towards Harley-ſtreet, he pondered on what had happened; and pleaſed that he had though unpremeditatedly, paid the juſt compliment of his entire confidence, to the uncommon friendſhip of the counteſs; he arrived at Lady Dundas's door, before he was ſenſible of the ground he had paſſed over; and, in a few minutes afterwards was uſhered into his accuſtomed purgatory.

When the ſervant opened the ſtudy-door, Miſs Euphemia was again alone. Thaddeus recoiled, but he could not retreat.

"Come in, Mr. Conſtantine," cried the little beauty, in a languid tone; "my ſiſter is gone to the riding-ſchool with Mr. Laſcelles. Miſs Beaufort wanted me to drive out with her and my mother; but I preferred waiting for you."

The

The Count bowed; and, almoſt retreating with fear of what might next be ſaid, he gladly heard a thundering knock at the door, and, a moment after, the voice of Miſs Dundas aſcending the ſtairs.

He had juſt opened his books, when ſhe entered, followed by her lover. Panting under a heavy riding-habit, ſhe flung herſelf on a ſofa, and began to vilify "the odious heat of Fozard's odious place;" and telling Euphemia ſhe would play truant to-day, ordered her to attend to her leſſons.

Owing to the warmth of the weather, Thaddeus came out this morning without boots; and it being the firſt time that the fine proportion of his limb, had been ſeen by any of the preſent company, excepting Euphemia; Laſcelles, burſting with a diſdain of ſuch inſignificant diſtinctions, (which he would not call envy) meaſured the Count's beautiful leg with his inſolent eyes; then, declaring he was quite in a furnace, took the corner of his glove, and waving it to and fro, half muttered, "*Come gentle air.*"

"*The*

"*The fairer* Lafcelles *cries!*" exclaimed Euphemia, looking off her exercife.

"What! does your maſter teach you wit?" drawled the coxcomb, with a particular emphaſis.

Thaddeus affecting not to hear, continued to direct his pupil.

The indefatigable Lafcelles having obſerved the complacence with which the Count always regarded Miſs Beaufort, determined the goad ſhould fret; and drawing out of his pocket the netting which he had taken the night before from Mary, exclaimed, "'Fore Heaven, here is my little Beaufort's purſe."

Thaddeus ſtarted, and unconſciouſly looking up, beheld the well-known work of Mary, dangling in the hand of Lafcelles. He felt ſenſations unknown to him; his eyes became dim, and hardly knowing what he ſaw or ſaid, he purſued the leſſon with encreaſed velocity.

The malicious puppy, having found his malice take effect; with a careleſs air, threw his clumſy limbs on the vacant part of the ſofa, which Miſs Dundas had quitted to

ſeat

ſeat herſelf nearer the window, and cried, in a voice of ſudden recollection,

"By the bye, that Miſs Mary Beaufort, when ſhe chuſes to be ſincere, is a ſad little ariſtocrat."

"You may as well tell me," replied Miſs Dundas, with a contemptuous curl of her lip, "that ſhe is the Empreſs of Ruſſia."

"I beg your pardon," cried he, raiſing his voice, at his judgment being doubted; "I will prove it to you. When ſhe gave me this gew-gaw," added he, rumpling the purſe in his hand, "ſhe told me an everlaſting ſtory about ſome friend of hers, whoſe muſic-maſter, having miſtaken ſome condeſcenſions on her part, had dared to ſnatch a kiſs from her ſnowy fingers as they were flying over the ſtrings of her harp. You cannot imagine how Beaufort's pretty eyes blazed as ſhe related this tale; I verily believe, had it been herſelf, ſhe would have given poor Tweedledum a flouriſh acroſs the cheek."

Miſs Dundas laughed.

"Theſe energetic young ladies, poſſeſs not the gentleſt paſſions in the world; and after

after Miſs Beaufort's outrageous ſally laſt night to you, I ſhould not wonder at any indecorum ſhe might commit."

"Outrageous to me!" echoed the fop, dipping the end of the netting, into Diana's lavender bottle and dabbing his temples, "She was always too civil by half. I hate forward girls."

Thaddeus ſhut the large dictionary that lay before him, with a violence that made the puppy ſtart; and riſing haſtily from his chair, with a face as red as crimſon, was taking up his hat, when the door opened, and Mary appeared.

A white chip hat was reſting lightly on the glittering treſſes which waved over her forehead; whilſt her lace-ſhade, gently diſcompoſed by the air, half veiled, and half revealed, her graceful figure. She entered with a ſmile, and walking up to the ſide of the table where Thaddeus was ſtanding, enquired after his friend's health. He anſwered her in a voice unuſually agitated. All that he had been told by the Counteſs of her favourable opinion of him; and the ſlander he had juſt heard from

Diana's

Diana's lover, were at once preſent to his mind.

He was yet ſpeaking, when Miſs Beaufort caſually looking towards the other ſide of the room, ſaw her purſe ſtill acting the part of a handkerchief, in the hand of Mr. Laſcelles.

"Look, Mr. Conſtantine," ſaid ſhe, gaily tapping his arm with her paraſol, "how the moſt precious things may be degraded! There is the netting that you have ſo often admired, and which I intended for Lady Tinemouth's pocket, debaſed to do the office of Mr. Laſcelles's napkin."

"You gave it to him, Miſs Beaufort," cried Miſs Dundas; "and after that, ſurely he may uſe it as he values it!"

"If I could have given it to Mr. Laſcelles, Madam, I ſhould hardly have taken notice of its fate."

Miſs Dundas, believing what her lover had advanced, was diſpleaſed at Mary, for having by preſents, interfered with any of her danglers, and rather angrily replied, "Mr. Laſcelles ſaid you gave it to him; and

and certainly you would not insinuate a word against his veracity?"

"No, not *insinuate*," returned Miss Beaufort, "but *affirm*, that he has forgotten his veracity at least in this statement."

Lascelles yawned,—"Lord bless me, ladies, how you quarrel! You will disturb Monsieur."

"Mr. Constantine," returned Mary, blushing with indignation, "cannot be disturbed by nonsense."

Thaddeus again took his hat: bowing to his lovely champion, with an expression of countenance, which he little suspected had passed from his heart to his eyes, he was preparing to take his leave, when Euphemia requested him to inform her whether she had folded down the right pages for the next exercise. He drew near, and was leaning over her chair to look at the book, when she whispered, "Don't be hurt at what Lascelles says; he is always jealous of any body who is handsomer than himself."

Thaddeus bowed to her with a face of scarlet; for, on meeting the eyes of Mary, he

he saw that she had heard this intended comforter as well as himself; and, uttering a few incoherent sentences to both ladies, he hurried out of the room.

CHAP. VI.

THE Count Sobieſki was prevented from paying his cuſtomary viſit, next morning in Harley-ſtreet, by the ſudden illneſs of the general, who, at ſeven o'clock, had been ſtruck with a fit of the palſy.

When Dr. Cavendiſh beheld the poor old man ſtretched along the bed, and hardly exhibiting ſigns of life, he pronounced it to be a death-ſtroke. At this ſentence, Thaddeus turning deadly pale, ſtaggered to a ſeat, with his eyes fixed on the altered features of his friend. Dr. Cavendiſh took his hand.

"Recollect yourſelf, my dear Sir! Happen when it will, his death muſt be a releaſe. But do not expect it for ſome time; he may yet linger a week or a fortnight."

"Not in pain, I hope!" ſaid Thaddeus, riſing.

"No;"

"No;" returned the doctor, "probably he will remain as you now see him, and expire like the last glimmer of a dying taper."

The benevolent Cavendish proceeded to give particular directions, to Thaddeus, and Mrs. Robson who promised to act as nurse; and then with regret left the stunned Count to the melancholy task of watching by the bed-side of his venerable friend.

Thaddeus now retained no thought that was not rivetted on the emaciated form before him. Whilst the unconscious invalid struggled for respiration, he listened to his short and convulsed breathing, with sensations which seemed to tear the strings of his own breast. Unable to bear it longer, he moved opposite to the fire, and seating himself, with his pallid face and aching head supported on his arm, which rested on a plain deal table, he remained, meeting no other suspension from deep meditation, than the now and then appearance of Mrs. Robson on tiptoes, peeping in, and inquiring whether he wanted any thing.

From this depreſſing reverie, he was aroufed next morning at nine o'clock, by the entrance of Dr. Cavendiſh. Thaddeus ſeized his hand with the eagerneſs of anxiety,—"he has not been worſe, my dear Sir, may I hope that ———"

The doctor, not ſuffering him to finiſh with what he hoped, ſhook his head, and waving his hand in ſign of the vanity of that hope, advanced to the bed of the general, and felt his pulſe. His opinion exactly coincided with what he had declared before, differing only in one particular, that he now ſaw no abſolute threatenings of an immediate diſſolution.

"Poor Butzou!" ſaid Thaddeus, as the doctor withdrew, putting the general's motionleſs hand to his quivering lips, "I never will leave thee! I will watch by thee, thou laſt relic of my country!"

With anguiſh at his heart, he wrote a few haſty lines to the counteſs: Then addreſſing Miſs Dundas, he offered as the reaſon for his late and continued abſence, the danger of his friend.

His

His note found Miſs Dundas attended by, her conſtant ſhadow Mr. Laſcelles, Lady Villiers, and two or three more fine ladies and gentlemen, beſides Euphemia and Miſs Beaufort, who, with penſive countenances, were waiting the arrival of its writer.

When Miſs Dundas had taken the billet off the ſilver ſalver on which her man preſented it, and had looked at the ſuperſcription, ſhe threw it into the lap of Laſcelles.

"There," cried ſhe, "is an excuſe, I ſuppoſe, from Mr. Conſtantine, for his impertinence in not coming here yeſterday. Read it Laſcelles."

"'Fore Gad, I wouldn't touch it for an earldom!" exclaimed the affected puppy, jerking it on the table, "It might infect me with the hypochondriacs. Pray, Phemy, do you peruſe it."

Euphemia, in her eagerneſs to learn what had detained Mr. Conſtantine, neglected the inſolence of the requeſt, and, haſtily breaking the ſeal, read as follows:

"Mr. Conſtantine hopes that a ſudden and dangerous diſorder, which has attacked the life of a very dear friend with whom he reſides, will be a ſufficient appeal to the humanity of the Miſs Dundases, and obtain his pardon for relinquiſhing the honour of attending them yeſterday and to-day."

"Dear me!" cried Euphemia, piteouſly, "how ſorry I am! I dare ſay, it is that white-haired old gentleman we ſaw in the Park. You remember, Mary, he was ſick?"

"Probably," returned Miſs Beaufort, with her eyes fixed on the agitated handwriting of Thaddeus.

"Throw the letter into the ſtreet, Phemy!" cried Miſs Dundas, affecting ſudden terror, "Who knows but what it is a fever the man has got, and we may all catch our deaths."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Mary, in a voice of real alarm: but it was for Thaddeus; not fear of any infection which the paper might bring to herſelf.

"Laſcelles,

"Lascelles, take away the filthy scrawl from Phemy. How can you be so headstrong, child?" cried Diana, snatching the letter from her sister, and throwing it out of the window, "I declare you are sufficient to provoke a saint."

"Then, you may keep your temper, Di," returned Euphemia, with a sneer, "you are far enough from that title."

Miss Dundas made a very angry reply, which was retaliated with another; and a still more noisy and disagreeable altercation might have taken place, had not a good humoured lad, a brother-in-law of Lady Villiers, in hopes of calling off the attention of the sisters, exclaimed, "Bless me, Miss Dundas, your little dog has pulled a folded sheet of paper from under that stand of flowers! Perhaps it may be of consequence!"

"Fly! Take it up, George!" cried Lady Villiers, "Esop will tear it to atoms whilst you are asking questions."

After a chace round the room, over chairs, and through tables, George Villiers

at length plucked the devoted piece of paper out of the dog's mouth; and, as Miſs Beaufort was gathering up her working materials, to leave the room, opened it, and cried, in a voice of triumph, "By Jove! It is a copy of verſes!"

"Verſes!" demanded Euphemia, feeling in her pocket, and colouring, "Let me ſee them."

"That you ſha'nt," roared Laſcelles, catching them out of the boy's hand, "if they be your writing, we will have them."

"Help me, Mary!" cried Euphemia, turning to Miſs Beaufort, "I know that nobody is a poet in this houſe, but myſelf. They muſt be mine, and I will have them."

"Surely, Mr. Laſcelles," ſaid Mary, compaſſionating the poor girl's anxiety, "you will not be ſo rude as to detain them from their right owner?"

"O! but I will," cried he, mounting on a table, to get out of Euphemia's reach, who now, half crying, tried to

ſnatch

ſnatch at the paper. "Let me alone, Miſs Phemy. I will read them; ſo here goes it."

Miſs Dundas laughed at her ſiſter's confuſed looks, whilſt Laſcelles prepared to read, in a loud voice, the following verſes. They had been haſtily ſcribbled in pencil by Thaddeus, a long time ago; who having put them by miſtake, with ſome other papers, into his pocket, had dropped them next day, in taking out his handkerchief at Lady Dundas's. Laſcelles cleared his throat with three hems, then raiſing his right hand with a flouriſh of action, in a very pompous tone, began—

"Like one, whom Etna's torrent fires have ſent
Far from the land, where his firſt youth was ſpent;
Who, inly drooping, on a foreign ſhore
Broods over ſcenes, which charm his eyes no more;
And while his country's ruin wakes the groan,
Yearns for the buried hut, he call'd his own.
So driv'n, O Poland! from thy ravag'd plains,
So mourning o'er thy ſad, but lov'd remains,
A friendleſs wretch, *I* wander through the world,
From Fame, from Grandeur, and from Comfort hurl'd!

O! not, that each long night my weeping eyes
Sink into Sleep, unlull'd by Pity's sighs;
Not, that in bitter tears my bread is steep'd;
Tears drawn by insult on my sorrows heap'd;
Not, that my thoughts recall a mother's grave;—
Recall the fire I would have died to save,
Who fell before me, bleeding on the field,
Whilst I in vain opposed the fruitless shield:—
Ah! not for these I grieve!—Tho' mental woe
More deadly still, scarce Fancy's self could know.
O'er want and private griefs the soul can climb,
Virtue subdues the one, the other Time;—
But, at his country's fall, the patriot feels
A grief, no time, no drug, no reason, heals.—
Mem'ry! remorseless murderer! whose voice
Kills as it sounds; who never says, rejoice!
To my deserted heart, by joy forgot;
Thou pale, thou midnight spectre, haunt me not!
Thou dost but point to where sublimely stands
A glorious temple rear'd by Freedom's hands,
Circled with palms and laurels, crown'd with light,
Darting Truth's piercing sun on mortal sight:
Then, rushing on, leagued fiends of hellish birth,
Levelling the mighty fabric with the earth!
Slept the red bolt of Vengeance in that hour,
When virtuous Freedom fell the slave of Power!
Slumber'd the God of Justice! that no brand
Blasted, with blazing wing, the impious band!—
Dread God of Justice! to thy will I kneel,
Tho' still my filial heart must bleed and feel,
Tho' still the proud convulsive throb will rise,
When fools my country's wrongs and woes despise:

When

When low-soul'd Pomp, mean Wealth, that pity gives,
Which Virtue ne'er bestows, and ne'er receives,—
That Pity, stabbing where it vaunts to cure,
Which barbs the dart of Want, and makes it sure;—
How far remov'd from what the feeling breast,
Yields boastless, quench'd in sighs, to the distress'd!
Which whispers sympathy, with tender fear,
And almost dreads to pour its balmy tear.—
But such I know not now—unseen, alone,
I breathe the heavy sigh, I draw the groan;
And madd'ning, turn to days of liveliest joy,
When o'er my native hills I cast mine eye,
And said exulting,—"Free men here shall sow
"The seed, that soon in tossing gold shall glow!
"While Plenty, led by Liberty, shall rove
"Gay and rejoicing, through the land they love;
"And 'mid their loaded vines, the peasant see
"His wife, his children, breathing out—we're free!"
But now, O wretched land! above thy plains,
Half viewless thro' the gloom, vast Horror reigns.—
No happy peasant o'er his blazing hearth,
Devotes the supper-hour to love and mirth;
No flowers on Liberty's pure altar bloom,
Alas! they wither now, and strew her tomb!—
From the great Book of Nations fiercely rent,
My country's page to Lethe's stream is sent—
O! sent in vain!—Th' historic muse shall raise,
O'er wrong'd Sarmatia's cause, the voice of praise,
Shall sing *her* nobly struggling, e'en in death;
But blast her royal robbers' bloody wreath *!"

* These lines were furnish'd by a friend.

"It muſt be Conſtantine's!" cried Euphemia in a voice of ſurprized delight, when the reader had finiſhed, and ſpringing up to take the paper out of his hand.

"I dare ſay it is," anſwered the ill-natured Laſcelles, holding it above his head, "Come, you ſhall have it, only firſt let us hear it again; it is ſo mighty pretty, ſo very lackadaiſical!"

"Give it me," cried Euphemia, quite angry.

"Don't Laſcelles," exclaimed Miſs Dundas; "the man muſt be a perfect ideot to write ſuch rhodomontade."

"O! It is delectable!" returned her lover, opening the paper again, "It would make a charming ditty! Come, I will ſing it. Shall it be to the tune of *The Babes in the Wood*, or *Chevy Chace*, or *The Beggar of Bethnal Green?*"

"Senſeleſs, unfeeling wretch!" exclaimed Mary, riſing from her chair, where ſhe had been ſtriving to ſubdue thoſe emotions, with which every line in the poem had poſſeſſed her heart.

"Brute!"

"Brute!" cried the enraged Euphemia, taking courage at Miſs Beaufort's unuſual warmth, "I will have the paper."

"You ſhan't," anſwered the malicious coxcomb; and, raiſing his arms higher than her reach, he tore it into a hundred pieces.

At this ſight, Mary no longer able to contain herſelf, ruſhed out of the room; and hurrying to her own chamber, threw herſelf upon the bed, where ſhe gave way to a paroxyſm of tears, that ſhook her almoſt to ſuffocation.

During the firſt burſt of her indignation, her agitated ſpirit breathed every appellation of abhorrence and reproach, on Laſcelles and his malignant miſtreſs. Then, wiping her flowing eyes, ſhe ſaid, "Yet, can I wonder, when I compare Conſtantine with what *they* are? The man who dares to be virtuous and great, and appear ſo, arms the ſelf-love of all common characters againſt him."

Such being her meditations, ſhe refuſed to join the family at dinner; and, it was

not till evening, that she felt herself at all able to treat the ill-natured groupe with decent civility.

The next morning, Miss Beaufort (to avoid spending more hours than were absolutely necessary, in the company of a woman whom she now loathed;) borrowed Lady Dundas's sedan chair, and, ordering it to Lady Tinemouth's, found her ladyship, at home, alone, and evidently much agitated.

"I intrude on you, Lady Tinemouth!" said Mary, observing her looks, and withdrawing from the offered seat.

"No, my dear Miss Beaufort," replied her ladyship, when the servant closed the door, "I am glad you are come. I assure you, I have few pleasures in solitude. Read that letter," added she, putting one into the hand of Mary, "it has just conveyed one of the cruellest stabs that ever was offered from a son to the heart of his mother. Read it; and you will not be surprised at finding me in the state you see."

The

The Counteſs looked on her paralyſed hands as ſhe ſpoke; and Mary, taking the paper from her, ſat down, and read to herſelf the following letter.

"*To the Right Honourable the Counteſs of Tinemouth.*

"Madam,

"I am commiſſioned by the Earl, my father, to inform you, that if you have loſt all regard for your own character, he conſiders that ſome reſpect is due to the mother of his ſon; therefore, he watches your conduct.

"He has been appriſed of your frequent meetings during theſe many months, in Groſvenor Place, and at other people's houſes, with an obſcure foreigner, your declared lover. The Earl wiſhed to ſuppoſe this falſe, till your ſhameleſs behaviour became ſo flagrant, that he eſteems it neither worthy of doubt nor indulgence.

"With his own eyes he ſaw you, four nights ago, alone with this man in Hyde Park. Such demonſtration is dreadful.

Your

Your proceedings are abominable; and, if you do not, without further parley, ſet off either to Craighall in Cornwall, or the Wolds, you ſhall receive a letter from my ſiſter as well as myſelf, to tell the diſhonoured Lady Tinemouth, how much ſhe merits her daughter's contempt, added to that of

HARWOLD."

"And what do you mean to do, my dear Madam?" inquired Mary, ſhocked at this inſtance of an ingratitude diſgraceful to human nature.

"I will obey my Lord and his children," returned the Counteſs burſting into tears, "My laſt action ſhall be in obedience to their will. I cannot live long; and when I am dead, perhaps the Earl's vigilance may be ſatisfied; perhaps, ſome kind friend may then plead my cauſe in my daughter's heart. One cruel line from her would kill me. I will at leaſt avoid the completion of that threat, by leaving town to-morrow night."

"So

"So ſoon! But I hope not to Cornwall?"

"No," replied her ladyſhip, "Craighall is too near Plymouth. I ſhall determine on the Wolds. Yet, why ſhould I have a choice? It is almoſt a matter of indifference to what ſpot I am baniſhed; in what place I am to die. Any where, I ſhall be equally remote from a friend."

Mary's heart was oppreſſed when ſhe entered the room; Lady Tinemouth's ſorrows ſeemed to give her a licence to weep. She took her ladyſhip's hand, and with difficulty ſobbed out this inarticulate offer, "Take me, dear Lady Tinemouth! I am ſure my guardian will be happy to permit me to be with you, where, and how long you like."

"Dear Mary," replied the Counteſs, kiſſing her wet cheek, "I thank you from my heart; but I cannot take ſo ungenerous an advantage of your goodneſs, as to conſign your tender nature to the haraſſing taſk of attending on ſorrow and ſickneſs. How ſtrangely different may even amicable diſpoſitions be tempered! Maria Egerton is

better

better framed for ſuch an office. Kind as ſhe is, the hilarity of her diſpoſition does not allow the ſympathy ſhe beſtows on others, either to injure her mind or her body."

Mary interrupted her. "I ſhould be grieved, my dear Counteſs, to believe, that my very aptitude to ſerve my friends, will prove the firſt reaſon why I ſhould be denied that pleaſure. It is only in ſcenes of affliction that friendſhip is tried and declares its truth. If Miſs Egerton were not going with you, I ſhould certainly inſiſt on putting my affection to that ordeal."

"You miſtake, my ſweet friend," returned her ladyſhip, "Maria is forbidden to remain any longer with me. You have overlooked the poſtſcript to Lord Harwold's letter, elſe you muſt have ſeen the whole of my cruel ſituation. Turn over the leaf."

Miſs Beaufort opened the ſheet, and read theſe few lines, which being written on the interior part of the paper, had eſcaped her ſight.

"Go where you will, it is our eſpecial injunction that you leave a Miſs Egerton behind

behind you; whom we hear has been the ambaſſadreſs in this ſhocking intrigue. If we learn that you diſobey, and perſiſt in ſuch audacity, it ſhall be worſe for you in every reſpect; as it will convince us beyond a poſſibility of doubt, how uniform is the turpitude of your conduct."

Lady Tinemouth graſped Miſs Beaufort's hand, as ſhe threw the barbarous ſcrawl on the table. "And that, Mary, is from the ſon for whom I felt all a mother's agonies; all a mother's love! Had he died the firſt hour in which he ſaw the light, what a maſs of guilt might he not have eſcaped! It is he," added ſhe in a lower voice, and looking wildly round, "that breaks my heart. I could have borne his father's perfidy; but, inſult, oppreſſion, from my child! Oh, Mary, you know not its bitterneſs!"

Mary could only anſwer with her tears.

After a pauſe of near a quarter of an hour, in which the Counteſs ſtrove to tranquillize her ſpirits, ſhe reſumed in a more compoſed voice.

"Excuſe

"Excuse me for an instant, my dear Miss Beaufort; I must write to Mr. Constantine. I have yet to inform him that my absence is to be added to his other misfortunes."

With her eyes raining down upon the paper, she took up a pen, and having hastily written a few lines, was sealing them, when Mary looking up, hardly conscious of the words which escaped her lips, said, with anguished eagerness, "Lady Tinemouth, you know much of that noble and unhappy young man?" Her eye irresolutely, and her cheek glowing, awaited the answer of the Countess, who for a moment continued to gaze on the letter she held in her hand as if in profound thought; then all at once raising her head, and regarding the now down-cast face of Mary, with tenderness, replied in a tone which conveyed the deep interest of her heart.

"I do Mary. He has reposed his griefs in my friendship and honour, therefore, I must hold them sacred."

"I will not ask you to betray them," returned Mary in a faultering voice, "Yet, I cannot

I cannot help lamenting his ſufferings, and eſteeming the fortitude with which he ſupports his fall."

The Counteſs looked ſtedfaſtly on her fluctuating countenance. "Has Conſtantine, my dear Miſs Beaufort, inſinuated to you, that he ever was otherwiſe than as he now appears?"

Mary could not reply. She would not truſt her lips with words, but ſhook her head in ſign that he had not. Lady Tinemouth was too well read in the human heart, to doubt for an inſtant, the cauſe of Miſs Beaufort's queſtion and conſequent emotion. Feeling, that ſomething was due to an anxiety ſo diſintereſted and noble, ſhe took her paſſive hand, and ſaid, "Mary, you have gueſſed rightly. Though I am not authorized to tell you the real name of Conſtantine, nor the particulars of his hiſtory; let this ſatisfy your generous heart, that it can never be more honourably employed, than in compaſſionating calamities which ought to wreath his young brows with glory."

Mary's

Mary's eyes ſtreamed afreſh, whilſt her exulting ſoul ſeemed ready to ruſh from her boſom.

"Mary!" continued the Counteſs, warmed by the recollection of his excellence; "You have no need to bluſh at the intereſt which you take in this amiable Conſtantine! Every trial of ſpirit which could have tortured youth or manhood, has been endured by him with the firmneſs of a hero. Ah, my ſweet friend," added the Counteſs, preſſing the hand of the confuſed Mary, who, aſhamed, and conſcious that her behaviour betrayed how dearly ſhe conſidered him, had covered her face with her handkerchief; "when you are diſpoſed to believe that a man is as great as his titles and demands aſſert, examine with a nice obſervance, whether his pretenſions be real or artificial. Imagine him diſrobed of ſplendor, and ſtruggling with the world's inclemencies. If his character cannot ſtand this ordeal, he is only a pageant of pomp, inflated and garniſhed; and it is reaſonable to puniſh his arrogance with contempt. But, on the reverſe, when like Conſtantine, he riſes

riſes from the aſhes of his fortunes in a brighter blaze of virtue; then, deareſt girl," cried the Counteſs encircling her with her arms, "it is the ſweeteſt privilege of lovelineſs, to conſole and bleſs ſo rare a being."

Mary raiſed her deluged face from the boſom of her friend; and, claſping her hands together with trepidation and anguiſh, implored her to be as faithful to her ſecret, as ſhe had proved herſelf to Conſtantine's: "I would ſooner die," added the agitated Mary, "than have him know my raſhneſs, perhaps my indelicacy! Let me poſſeſs his eſteem, Lady Tinemouth! Let him ſuppoſe, that I only *eſteem* him! More, I ſhould ſhrink from; I have ſeen him beſet by ſome of my ſex; and to be claſſed with *them!* To have him imagine that my affection is like *theirs!* I could not bear it—I entreat you, let him reſpect me!"

The impetuoſity, and almoſt deſpair, with which Miſs Beaufort uttered theſe incoherent ſentences, pierced to the ſoul of

Lady

Lady Tinemouth. How different was the ſpirit of this pure and dignified love, to the wild paſſion, which ſhe had ſeen ſhake the frame of Lady Sara Roos!

They remained ſilent for ſome time.

"May I ſee your ladyſhip to-morrow?" aſked Mary, drawing her cloak about her.

"I fear not;" replied the Counteſs, "I leave this houſe to-morrow."

Mary roſe; her lips, hands, and feet trembled ſo, that ſhe could hardly ſtand. Lady Tinemouth threw her arm round her waiſt, and kiſſing her forehead, ſaid, "Heaven bleſs you, my dear Miſs Beaufort! May all the wiſhes of your innocent heart be gratified!"

The Counteſs ſupported her to the door. Mary heſitated an inſtant, then flinging her ſnowy arms over her ladyſhip's neck, in a voice ſcarcely audible, articulated, "Only tell me! Does he love Euphemia?"

Lady Tinemouth ſtrained her to her breaſt; "No, my deareſt girl; I am certain, both from what I have heard him ſay, and

and obſerved in his eyes, that had he dared to love any one, *you* would have been the object of his choice."

How Mary got into Lady Dundas's chair, ſhe had no recollection, ſo completely was ſhe abſorbed in the recent ſcene. Her mind was perplexed, her heart ached; and ſhe arrived in Harley Street ſo much diſordered and unwell, as to oblige her to retire immediately to her room, with the excuſe of a violent pain in her head.

This interview with Miſs Beaufort, induced Lady Tinemouth to deſtroy the note that ſhe had written to Thaddeus, purpoſing before night, to frame another, better calculated to produce comfort to all parties. What ſhe declared to Mary reſpecting the ſtate of the Count's affections, was ſincere.

She had early penetrated through the veil of baſhfulneſs, with which Miſs Beaufort had obſcured that countenance, ſo uſually the tablet of her ſoul. The Counteſs eaſily tranſlated the quick receding of Mary's eye, whenever Thaddeus turned his attention towards her; the confuſed reply that followed

followed any unexpected question from his lips; and above all, the unheeded sighs heaved by her, when he left the room, or when his name was mentioned during his absence. These symptoms too truly revealed to Lady Tinemouth, the state of her young friend's bosom.

But the circumstances being different, her observations on the Count were not nearly so conclusive. Mary had absolutely given the empire of her happiness, with her heart, into his hands. Thaddeus wished, that his ruined hopes had not prevented him from laying his, at her feet. Therefore, not having surrendered his imagination to a passion, which, in his situation, he considered as madness, he was unembarrassed in her presence; and, regarding her as a being beyond his reach, conceived no suspicions, that she entertained one dearer thought of him than what mere philanthropy could authorise.

He contemplated her unequalled beauty, graces, talents, and virtues, with an admiration bordering on idolatry; yet his heart flew from the confession that he loved her:

and it was not until reaſon demanded of his candour, why he had felt a pang on ſeeing Mary's purſe in the hands of Mr. Laſcelles, that with a glowing cheek, he owned to himſelf, he was jealous: that although he had not preſumed to elevate one wiſh towards the poſſeſſion of Miſs Beaufort; yet, when Laſcelles flaunted her name on his tongue, he found how poignant would be the wound in his peace, ſhould ſhe ever give her hand to another.

Confounded at this diſcovery of a paſſion, the ſeeds of which, he ſuppoſed had been cruſhed by the weight of his misfortunes, he proceeded homewards, with ſenſations not far differing from thoſe of the dreamer, who ſinks into a light but haraſſing ſlumber, and, full of terror, doubts whether he be ſleeping or awake.

The ſudden illneſs of General Butzou having put theſe ideas to flight, Thaddeus was ſitting on the bed-ſide, with his anxious thoughts fixed on the pale ſpectacle of mortality before him, when Nancy brought in a letter from the Counteſs.

He took it, and going to the window, undrew the curtain, where he read, with mingled pain and pleasure, the following epistle.

"*To Mr. Constantine.*

"I know not, my dear Count, when I shall be permitted to see you again; perhaps never on this side the grave!

"Since heaven has denied me the tenderness of my own children, it would have been a comfort to me, might I have continued to act a parent's part by you. But my cruel lord, and my more cruel son, jealous of the consolation I meet in the society of my few intimate friends, command me to quit London: and as I have ever made it a system to obey their injunctions strictly, I shall go.

"It pierces me to the soul, my *dear son!* (allow my maternal heart to call you by that name!) it distresses me deeply, that I am compelled to leave the place where *you* are: neither can I see you prior to my departure, for I quit town to-morrow afternoon.

"Write

" Write to me often, my loved Sobieſki: Your letters will be ſome alleviation during the fulfilment of my hard duty.

" Wear the encloſed gold chain for my ſake; it is one of two given me a long time ago by Miſs Beaufort. If I have not greatly miſtaken you, the preſent will now poſſeſs a double value in your eſtimation: indeed it ought. Senſibility and thankfulneſs, being properties of your nature, they will not deny a lively gratitude to the generous intereſt with which that amiable young woman regards your fate. It is impoſſible, that the avowed Count Sobieſki, (whom a year ago, I remember her animated fancy painted in the moſt romantic colours,) could excite more of her eſteem, than I know ſhe has beſtowed on the melancholy, the untitled Conſtantine.

" She is all nobleneſs and affection. Although I am ſenſible that ſhe will leave much behind her in London to regret, ſhe inſiſts on accompanying me to the Wolds. Averſe to tranſgreſs ſo far on her goodneſs,

I reſolutely refuſed her offer, till this evening, I received ſo warm and urging a letter from the kind girl, that I can no longer withhold my conſent.

" Indeed, this lovely creature's active friendſhip, proves of high conſequence to me now, ſituated as I am with regard to a new whim of the Earl's. Had ſhe not benevolently preſented, herſelf in obedience to my lord's commands I ſhould have been obliged to go alone; he, having taken ſome wild antipathy to Miſs Egerton, whoſe company he has interdicted. At any rate, her parents would not have allowed me her ſociety much longer, as Mr. Montreſor is to return this month.

" I ſhall not be eaſy, my dear Count, till I hear from you. Pray write ſoon: and inform me of every particular reſpecting the poor General: is he likely to recover?

" In all things, my *loved ſon*, in which I can ſerve you, remember, that I expect you will call on me *as a mother*. Your own could hardly have regarded you with deeper

deeper tenderneſs, than does your affectionate and faithful

" ADELIZA TINEMOUTH.

" Groſvenor Place.
" Thurſday, midnight.

" Direct to me, at Harwold-park, Wolds, Lincolnſhire."

Several oppoſite emotions diſcompoſed the mind of Thaddeus, whilſt reading this epiſtle. Encreaſed abhorrence of the man, whom he believed to be inconteſtibly his father, united with regret ariſing from the propoſed departure of Lady Tinemouth, could neither ſubdue the balmy effect of her maternal affection, nor wholly check that thrill, which the unuſual mentioning of Miſs Beaufort s name, made throb in his heart, and paint his cheeks with crimſon. He read the ſentence that contained the aſſurances of her friendſhip, a third time.

" Delicious poiſon!" cried he, kiſſing the paper, " If adoring thee, lovely Mary,

be added to my other ſorrows, I ſhall be reſigned! There is ſweetneſs even in the thought. Could I credit all which my dear Lady Tinemouth affirms, the conviction that I poſſeſs one kind ſolicitude in the mind of Miſs Beaufort, would be ample compenſation for——"

He did not finiſh the ſentence, but ſighing profoundly, roſe from his chair.

"For any thing, except beholding her the wife of another!" was the ſentiment with which his heart panted. Thaddeus had never known a ſelfiſh feeling in his life; and this firſt inſtance of his wiſhing that good unappropriated, which he might not himſelf enjoy, made him ſtart.

"There is a fault in my heart, a dreadful one!" Diſſatisfied with himſelf, he was preparing to anſwer her ladyſhip's letter, when, turning to the date, he diſcovered that it had been written on Thurſday night; and, in conſequence of Nancy's neglect, in not calling at the coffee-houſe, had been delayed a day and a half before it reached his hands.

His

His disappointment at this accident was severe. She was gone, and Mary along with her!

"Then indeed I am unfortunate!" said he, holding the chain in his hand, and looking on it; "I am at once deprived of all that rendered my forlorn existence in this town, tolerable!"

He put the chain round his neck; and, with a true lover-like feeling, thought that it warmed the heart, which mortification had chilled; but the fancy was evanescent, and he again turned to watch the fading life of his friend.

During the lapse of a few days, in which the general appeared merely to breath; Thaddeus, instead of his attendance, dispatched regular notes to Harley-street. In answer to these excuses, he commonly received little tender billets from Euphemia; the strain of which he seemed totally to overlook, by the cold respect that he evinced in his diurnal apologies for absence.

This young lady was so full of lamentation over the trouble which her elegant

tutor muſt endure in watching his ſick friend, that ſhe never thought it worth while to mention any creature in the houſe except herſelf and her commiſeration. Thaddeus longed to inquire about Miſs Beaufort; but the more he wiſhed it, the greater reluctance he felt to write her name.

Things were in this ſituation, when one evening, as he was reading by the light of a ſolitary candle in his little ſitting-room, the door opened, and Nancy ſtepped in, followed by a perſon wrapped up in a large black cloak. Thaddeus immediately roſe.

"A lady, Sir," ſaid Nancy, curtſying.

The moment the girl withdrew, the viſitor caſt herſelf into a chair, and ſobbing aloud, ſeemed in violent agitation. The Count, aſtoniſhed and alarmed, approached her, and though ſhe was unknown, offered her every aſſiſtance in his power.

Catching hold of the hand, which with the greateſt reſpect he extended towards her, ſhe inſtantly diſplayed to his diſmayed ſight, the features of Lady Sara Roos.

"Merciful

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed he, involuntarily ſtarting back.

"Do not caſt me off, Conſtantine!" cried ſhe, claſping his arm, and looking up to him, with a face of anguiſh, bathed in tears, "on you alone, I now depend for happineſs! for exiſtence!"

A cold damp ſtood on the forehead of her auditor. A tremor ſhook him from head to foot.

"Dear Lady Sara, what am I to underſtand by this emotion? Has any thing dreadful happened? Is Captain Roos ——?"

Lady Sara ſhuddered, and, ſtill graſping his hand, anſwered in words, every one of which palſied the heart of Thaddeus with horror;—"He is coming home.—He is now at Portſmouth.—O Conſtantine! I am not yet ſo debaſed, as to live with him, when my heart is yours."

At this ſhameful declaration, Thaddeus clenched his teeth in fearful agony; and, ſtriking his hand upon his cloſed eyes, to ſhut her from his ſight; he turned ſuddenly round, and walked towards another part of the room.

Lady Sara followed him. Her cloak having fallen off, now displayed her fine form in all the fervour of grief and distraction; she wrung her snowy arms in despair; and, with accents rendered more piercing by the anguish of her mind, exclaimed, "What? You hate me? You throw me from you? Cruel, barbarous Constantine! Can you drive from your feet the woman who adores you? Can you cast her who is without a home into the streets?"

Thaddeus felt his hand wet with her tears; he fixed his eyes upon her with almost delirious horror. Her hat being off, gave a loose to her long black hair, which falling in masses over her shoulders and eyes, gave such additional wildness to the imploring and frantic expression of those eyes, as distracted his soul.

"Rise, Madam! For Heaven's sake, Lady Sara!" and he stooped to support her up.

"Never," cried she, covering her face with her hands, "never! till you promise to protect me. My husband comes home

home to-night, and I have left his houſe for ever. You, you?" exclaimed ſhe, extending her arms to his averted face; "O Conſtantine! you have robbed me of my peace! On your account I have flown from my home.—For mercy's ſake, do not abandon me!"

"Lady Sara," cried he, looking wildly round him, "I cannot ſpeak to you in this poſition! Riſe, I implore you!"

"Only," returned ſhe, "only ſay that you will protect me! That I ſhall find ſhelter here! Say this, and I will riſe, and bleſs you for ever."

Thaddeus knew not what to reply. Diſtreſſed by her imprudence, terror-ſtruck at the violent lengths to which ſhe ſeemed determined to carry her unhappy and guilty paſſion, he in vain ſought to evade this direct demand; for Lady Sara, perceiving the reluctance and horror of his looks, ſprang from her knees, and, in a more reſolute voice, exclaimed, "Then, Sir, you will not protect me? You ſcorn and deſert a woman, whom you well know

has long loved you? Whom by your artful behaviour you have reduced to this disgrace!"

The Count, surprized and shocked at this accusation, with respectful gentleness, but resolution, denied the charge.

Lady Sara again melted into tears, and supporting her tottering frame against his shoulder, replied in a stifled voice, "I know it well. I have nothing to blame for my wretched state, but my own weakness. Pardon, dear Constantine, the dictates of my madness! O! I would gladly owe such misery to any other source than myself!"

"Then, dear Lady Sara," rejoined Thaddeus, gaining courage from the mildness of her manner, "let me implore you to return to your own house!"

"Don't ask me," cried she, grasping his hand; "O Constantine! if you knew what it was to receive with smiles of affection, a creature that you loath! you would shrink with disgust from what you require. I hate Captain Roos. Can I open my

I hate

arms to meet him, when my heart excludes him for ever? Can I welcome him home, when I wish him in his grave?"

The Count extricated his hand from her grasp. Her ladyship perceived the repugnance which dictated this action; and clasping her hands together, ejaculated, "Unhappy woman that I am! to hate, where I am loved! to love, where I am hated!—Kill me, Constantine!" cried she, turning suddenly towards him, and sinking down on a chair, "but do not give me such another look as that!"

"Dear Lady Sara," replied he, seating himself by her side, "what would you have me do? You see that I have no proper means of protecting you. I have no mother, no sisters, no friends, to receive you. You see that I am a *poor* man. Besides, your character ——"

"Talk not of my character!" cried she, "I will have none that does not depend on you!—Cruel Constantine! you will not understand me. I want no riches, no friends, but yourself. Give me *your* home, and

and *your* arms," added ſhe, throwing herſelf in an agony on his boſom, "and beggary would be paradiſe!"

Thaddeus felt a dimneſs ſpread over his eyes. So much lovelineſs, ſuch love, ſuch diſintereſtedneſs, for a moment obliterated every other impreſſion on his heart; but, recovering himſelf in an inſtant, he tore himſelf from her clinging arms, and ſtaggering back a few paces, held her off with his hand, and, in a voice of diſtraction, exclaimed, "Leave me, for pity's ſake!"

"No, deareſt Conſtantine!" cried ſhe, aware of her advantage, and again caſting herſelf at his feet, "Never, never, will I leave this ſpot, till you conſent, that your home ſhall be my home! That I ſhall ſerve you for ever!"

"All-powerful Heaven!" exclaimed Thaddeus, in an agony.

Lady Sara redoubled her tears and prayers.

"Seducing, dangerous woman!" cried he, looking at her with wild horror, "what is it you demand? Would you tear from me all that renders life bearable? Would you

you take from me a blameleſs conſcience, and drive me to end my miſerable days by a deed of deſperation?"

Deſpair was in every feature of his countenance, as he uttered the laſt words, and flew from her, into the apartment where the general lay aſleep. Lady Sara, little expecting to ſee any one but the man ſhe loved, ruſhed in after him, and was again preſſing to throw her imploring arms about her determined victim, when her eyes were ſuddenly arreſted by a livid, and ſhe thought, dead face of a perſon lying on the bed. Fixed to the ſpot, ſhe ſtood for a moment, then putting her ſpread hand on her forehead, uttered a faint cry, and fell heart-ſtruck and ſenſeleſs on the floor.

Thaddeus, having inſtant conviction of her miſtake, eagerly ſeized the moment of her inſenſibility to convey her home. He haſtily went to the top of the ſtairs, called to Nancy to run for a coach, and then returning to the extended figure of Lady Sara, lifted her in his arms, and carried her back to the room they had left.

By

By the help of hartſhorn and water, he reſtored her to a ſenſe of exiſtence. She ſlowly opened her eyes; then raiſing her head, looked round her with a terrified air, when her eye falling on the ſtill open door of the General's room, ſhe caught Thaddeus by the arm, and ſaid in a trembling voice, "O, take me from hence."

Whilſt ſhe yet ſpoke, a coach ſtopped at the door. The Count roſe, and attempted to ſupport her agitated frame againſt his ſhoulders, but ſhe trembled to ſuch a degree, that he was obliged to throw his arm about her waiſt, and almoſt carry her down ſtairs.

When he had placed her ladyſhip in the carriage, ſhe retained his hand, and ſaid in a faint tone; "You ſurely will not leave me?"

Thaddeus returned no other anſwer, than deſiring Nancy to ſit by the General till ſhe ſaw him again; and ſtepping into the coach, Lady Sara immediately ſnatched his hand, and bathed it with her tears.

"Where are you going to take me?"

"You

"You ſhall again, dear Lady Sara," replied he, "return to a guiltleſs and peaceful home."

"I cannot meet my huſband;" cried ſhe, wringing her hands, "he will ſee all my premeditated guilt in my countenance. O! Conſtantine, have pity on me! Miſerable creature that I am!" added ſhe, redoubling her grief, "It is horrible to live without you! It is dreadful to live with him! Take me not home I entreat you!"

The Count took her claſped hands in his.

"Reflect for a moment, my dear Lady Sara. I believe, if you love me, that it was in conſequence of virtues, which you thought I poſſeſſed."

"Indeed, you do me juſtice!" cried ſhe.

He continued.

"Think then, ſhould I yield to the influence of your beauty, and plunge you into a ſituation like that——" and he pointed to a groupe of unhappy women aſſembled at the corner of Pall-Mall. Lady Sara drew back with a thrill of horror;

"Think,

"Think, where would be, not only your innocence, but its price? I, being no longer worthy of your eſteem, you would hate me; you would hate yourſelf; and we ſhould continue together, two guilty creatures, abhorring each other."

Lady Sara, drowned in tears, did not articulate any ſounds but deep ſighs, till the coach ſtopped in St. James's Place.

"Go in with me," were all the words which ſhe could utter, as pulling her veil over her face, ſhe gave him her hand to aſſiſt her down the ſtep.

"Is Captain Roos arrived?" aſked Thaddeus of a ſervant, who, to his great joy, returned a reply in the negative. During his ride, he had alarmed himſelf, by anticipating the diſagreeable ſuſpicions which might ariſe in the mind of the huſband, ſhould he ſee his wife in her preſent ſtrange and diſtracted ſtate.

When Thaddeus had ſeated Lady Sara in her drawing-room, he prepared to take a reſpectful leave; but her ladyſhip getting up, laid one hand on his arm, whilſt with the other ſhe covered her convulſed features;

tures; and said, "Constantine, before you go; before we part, perhaps eternally; O! tell me, that you do not hate me! That you do not *hate* me!" repeated she, in a firmer tone, "I know too well, how deeply I am despised."

"Cease, my dearest Madam," returned he, tenderly replacing her on the sofa, "cease these vehement expressions. Shame does not depend on possessing passions, but on yielding to them. You have conquered, Lady Sara; and in future, I shall respect and love you as a dear friend. Whoever holds the first place in my heart, you shall always retain the second."

"Noble! generous Constantine!" cried she, straining his hand to her lips, and bathing it with her tears; "I can require no more. May heaven bless you wherever you go!"

Thaddeus dropt upon his knee; imprinted on both her hands a compassionate and fervent kiss; and rising hastily, quitted the room without a word.

CHAP. VII.

THE dream-like conſternation which enveloped the Count's faculties, ſince the preceding ſcene, was diſſipated next morning by the appearance of Dr. Cavendiſh. When he ſaw the general, he declared it to be his opinion, that in conſequence of his long and tranquil ſlumbers, he ſhould ſuppoſe ſome favourable criſis to be near; "probably," added he, "the recovery of his intellects. Such *phenomena* often in theſe caſes, happen immediately before death."

"Heaven grant it!" ejaculated the Count; "to hear his venerable voice again acknowledge, that I have acted by him, as became the grandſon of his friend; would be a comfort to me."

"But, Sir," ſaid the kind phyſician, touching his burning hand, "you muſt not forget the cares which are due to your own life. If you wiſh well to the General, during the

the few days he may have to live, you are indiſpenſibly obliged to preſerve your own ſtrength. You are already ill, and require air. I have an hour of leiſure," continued he, pulling out his watch, "I will remain here, till you have taken two or three walks round the park. It is abſolutely neceſſary; in this inſtance, I muſt take the privilege of friendſhip, and inſiſt on obedience."

Thaddeus, ſeeing that the benevolence of the excellent Cavendiſh was reſolute, took his hat, and with haraſſed ſpirits, walked down the lane towards Charing-croſs.

On entering Spring-garden gate, to his extreme ſurpriſe, the firſt objects which met his ſight, were Miſs Euphemia Dundas, and Miſs Beaufort.

Euphemia accoſted him immediately with ten thouſand inquiries reſpecting his friend, beſides congratulations on his own good looks.

Thaddeus bowed; then ſmiling faintly, turned to the bluſhing Mary; who, conſcious of the recent converſation which had

had paſſed between herſelf and Lady Tinemouth, trembled ſo much, that fearing to excite the ſuſpicion of Miſs E. Dundas by ſuch tremor, ſhe withdrew her arm, and walked forward alone, her feet tottering at every ſtep.

"I thought, Miſs Beaufort," ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to her, "that Lady Tinemouth was to have had the happineſs of your company to Harwold-park?"

"Yes," returned ſhe, fearfully raiſing her eyes to his face; the hectic glow of which, conveyed differing ſenſations to her breaſt, from thoſe that Euphemia had expreſſed; "but to my indeſcribeable alarm and diſappointment, the morning after I had written to fix my departure with her ladyſhip, my aunt's foot caught in the iron of the ſtair-carpet as ſhe was coming down ſtairs, and, throwing her from the top to the bottom, broke her leg. I could not quit her a moment during her firſt agonies; and the ſurgeons expreſſing their fears that a fever might enſue, I was obliged altogether to decline my attendance on the Counteſs!"

"And

"And how is Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet?" inquired Thaddeus, truly concerned at the accident.

"She is better, though confined to her bed;" replied Euphemia, ſpeaking before her companion could open her lips; "and indeed, poor Mary and myſelf have been ſuch cloſe nurſes, that my mother inſiſted on our walking out to-day."

"And Lady Tinemouth;" returned Thaddeus, again addreſſing Mary, "of courſe ſhe went alone?"

"Alas, yes!" replied Mary, "Miſs Egerton was forced to join her family in Leiceſterſhire."

"I believe," cried Euphemia, ſighing, "that Miſs Egerton is going to be married immediately. It has been a long attachment. Happy girl! I have heard Captain Roos, whoſe Lieutenant he was, ſay that he is the fineſt young man in the Navy. Did you ever ſee Mr. Montreſor?" added ſhe, turning her pretty eyes on the Count.

"I never had that honour."

"Bleſs

"Bleſs me! that is odd, conſidering your intimacy with Miſs Egerton. I aſſure you he is very charming."

Thaddeus neither heard this, nor a great deal more of the ſame trifling chit-chat which was ſlipping from the tongue of Miſs Euphemia; ſo intently were his eyes (ſent by his heart,) ſearching the down-caſt, but expreſſive countenance of Miſs Beaufort. His ſoul was full, and the fluctuations of her colour, with the embarraſſment of her ſtep, intereſted and affected him.

"Then you do not leave town for ſome time, Miſs Beaufort?" inquired he, "I may yet anticipate the honour of ſeeing——" he heſitated a moment, then added in a depreſſed tone—"your aunt, when I next wait on the Miſs Dundas's."

"Our ſtay entirely depends on her health;" returned ſhe, ſtriving to rally herſelf; "and I am ſure, ſhe will be equally happy to ſee you better; for, I am ſorry to ſay, that I cannot agree with Euphemia, in thinking that you look well."

"Merely a slight fever," replied he; "the effect of an anxiety and watching, which I fear will too soon cease, in the death of their cause. I came out now for a little air only, whilst the physician remains with my friend."

"Poor old gentleman!" sighed Mary, "how venerable was his appearance that morning in which we saw him in the Park! What a benign countenance!"

"His countenance," replied Thaddeus, his eyes turning mournfully towards the lovely speaker, "is the emblem of his character. He was the most amiable of men."

"And you are likely to lose so interesting a friend? dear Mr. Constantine, how I pity you!" As Euphemia uttered these words, she put the corner of her glove to her eye.

The Count looked at her, and, perceiving that her commiseration was affectation, he turned to Miss Beaufort, who was walking pensively by his side, and made further inquiries respecting Mrs. Dorothy. Solicitous to get back to St. Martin's Lane, he was

preparing to quit them, when Mary, as with a full heart she curtsied her adieu, at last, in a hurrying and confused manner, said, "Pray, Mr. Constantine, take care of yourself. You have other friends besides the one you are going to lose. I know Lady Tinemouth, I know my aunt—" she stopped short, and, covered with blushes, stood panting for another word to close the sentence; when Thaddeus, forgetting the presence of Euphemia, with delighted precipitancy caught hold of the hand which in the energy of speaking was a little extended towards him, and, pressing it with fervour, relinquished it immediately: overcome by confusion at the presumption of the action, he bowed with agitation to both ladies, and hastened through the Priory passage, into St. James's Street.

"Miss Beaufort!" cried Euphemia, reddening with vexation, and returning a perfumed handkerchief to her pocket; "I did not understand that you and Mr. Constantine were on such intimate terms!"

"What do you mean, Euphemia?"

"That you have betrayed the confidence which I repoſed in you;" cried the angry beauty, wiping away the really ſtarting tears with her white lace cloak; "I told you that the elegant Conſtantine was the lord of my heart, and you have ſeduced him from me! Till you came, he was ſo reſpectful, ſo tender, ſo devoted!—But I am rightly uſed! I ought to have carried my ſecret to the grave."

In vain Miſs Beaufort proteſted; in vain ſhe declared herſelf ignorant of poſſeſſing any power, over even one wiſh of Conſtantine's. Euphemia thought it monſtrous pretty to be the injured friend and forſaken miſtreſs; and all along the Park, and up Conſtitution Hill, until they arrived at Lady Dundas's carriage, which was waiting oppoſite Devonſhire Wall, ſhe affected to weep. When ſeated, ſhe continued her invectives: She called Miſs Beaufort, ungenerous, perfidious, traitor to friendſhip; and every romantic and diſloyal name, which her inflamed fancy could deviſe, till the ſight of Harley-ſtreet, checked her

tranſports, and relieved Miſs Beaufort from a load of impertinence and abuſe.

During this ſhort interview, Thaddeus received an impulſe to his feelings, which hurried them forward with an impetuous rapidity, that neither time nor ſucceeding ſorrows could ſtop or ſtem.

Mary's heavenly beaming eyes ſeemed to have encircled his head with love's brighteſt luſtre. The command, "Preſerve yourſelf for others beſides your dying friend," yet throbbed at his heart; with ten thouſand rapturous viſions dancing before his ſight, he felt treading in air, till the humble door of his melancholy home preſenting itſelf, at once wrecked the illuſion, and offered ſad reality, in the perſon of his emaciated friend.

On the Count's entrance into the ſick chamber, Doctor Cavendiſh gave him a few directions to purſue, when the General ſhould awake from a ſleep in which he had been ſunk ſince the preceding night; and Thaddeus, with a heart ſtill more depreſſed,

from

from the late unuſual exaltation of his feelings, ſat down on the bed for the remainder of the day.

At five in the afternoon, General Butzou awoke; ſeeing the Count, he ſtretched out his withered hand, and as the Doctor had predicted, accoſted him rationally.

"Come, dear Sobieſki! Come nearer, my dear maſter!"

Thaddeus roſe, and throwing himſelf on his knees, took the offered hand with apparent compoſure: It was a hard ſtruggle to reſtrain the emotions which were rouſed by this awful contemplation;—the return of reaſon to the ſoul, on the inſtant ſhe was ſummoned into the preſence of her Maker!

"My kind, my beloved Lord!" added Butzou, "to me, you have indeed performed a chriſtian's part; you have clothed, ſheltered, and preſerved me in your boſom. Bleſſed ſon of my moſt honoured maſter!"

The good old man put the hand of Thaddeus to his lips. Thaddeus could not ſpeak.

"I am going, dear Sobieſki," continued the General in a lower voice, "where I

ſhall meet your noble grandfather, your mother, and my brave countrymen: and if heaven grants me power, I will tell them, by whoſe labour I have lived, on whoſe breaſt I have expired."

Thaddeus could no longer retain his tears.

"Dear, dear General!" exclaimed he, graſping his hand; "my grandfather, my mother, my country! I loſe them again in thee!—O! would the ſame ſummons take *me* hence!"

"Huſh!" returned the dying man, "Heaven reſerves you, my honoured lord, for wiſe purpoſes. Youth and health are the marks of commiſſion: *You* poſſeſs them, with virtues, which will bear you through the conteſt. *I* have done; and my merciful judge, has evinced his pardon of my errors, by ſparing me in my old age, and leading me to die with you."

Thaddeus preſſed his friend's hand to his ſtreaming eyes, and promiſed to be reſigned. Butzou ſmiled upon him his ſatisfaction; then, cloſing his eye-lids, he compoſed himſelf to a reſt, that was neither ſleep nor ſtupor, but a balmy ſerenity, which

which seemed to be tempering his late recovered soul, for its immediate entrance on a world of eternal peace.

At nine o'clock, his breath became broken with quick sighs. The Count's heart trembled, and he drew closer to the pillow. Butzou felt him, and opening his eyes languidly, hardly articulated, (though not a sound escaped the ear of his friend,) "Raise my head."

Thaddeus put his arm under his neck, and lifting him up, reclined him against his bosom. Butzou squeezed his hands, and looking gratefully in his face, said, "The arms of a soldier, should be a soldier's bed. I am content."

He lay for a moment on the breast of the almost fainting Thaddeus; then suddenly quitting his grasp, he cried, "I lose you, Sobieski!"

"I am here," exclaimed the Count, catching his motionless hand. The dying General murmured a few words of blessing; and, turning his face inwards, breathed his last sigh on the heart of his last friend.

For a minute, Sobieski remained incapable of thought or action. When he recovered recollection, he withdrew from his melancholy station, and, laying the venerable remains of the General on the bed, did not trust his rallied faculties with a second trial, but, hastening down stairs, was met by Mrs. Robson.

"My dear Madam," said he, "all is over with my poor friend. Will you do me the everlasting kindness, to perform those duties to his sacred relics, which I cannot?"

Mrs. Robson, with tears, and expressions of gratitude, for his goodness, when she was in a similar distress, sent to request the assistance of the charitable neighbour who had succoured her in the case of her lamented little William; and together, they arranged and ordered every thing that was requisite.

Thaddeus would not allow any person to watch by his friend's coffin, besides himself. The meditations of this solitary night, presented to his sound and feeling mind, every argument, rather to induce

induce rejoicing than regret, that the eventful life of the brave Butzou had terminated.

"Yes, illuſtrious old man!" cried he, gazing on his marbled features, "If valour and virtue be the true ſources of nobility, thou ſurely wert noble! Ineſtimable defender of Staniſlaus and thy country! thou haſt run a long and bright career; and though thou art fated to reſt in the humble grave of poverty, it will be embalmed by the tears of heaven; it will be engraven on my heart."

Thaddeus did not weep whilſt he ſpoke. Nor did he weep, when he beheld the mould of St. Martin's church yard cloſe from his view the laſt dwelling of his friend. It began to rain. Doctor Cavendiſh, putting his arm through the Count's, tried to pull him away; but he lingered a moment, and, looking on the duſt as the ſexton piled it up, "Wretched Poland!" ſighed he, "how far from thee, lies one of thy braveſt ſons!"

Doctor Cavendiſh regarded him with pity and admiration; but he vainly at-

tempted to perſuade him to return with him to dinner: Thaddeus refuſed the kind invitation; alleging with a faint ſmile, that under every misfortune, he found his beſt comforter to be ſolitude.

Doctor Cavendiſh, reſpecting the reſignation and manlineſs of this anſwer, urged him no further; but expreſſed his regret that they could not meet again till the end of the week, he being obliged to hurry down to Stamford next day, on a medical conſultation of conſiderable moment: and, ſhaking hands with his thoughtful friend at the door of Mrs. Robſon's, they parted.

CHAP. IX.

NEXT morning, when the Count Sobieſki unfolded the ſeveral packets of papers which were put into his hands by little Nancy who brought his breakfaſt, he laid them, one after the other, on the table, and, ſighing heavily, ſaid to himſelf, "Now comes the bitterneſs of poverty! Heaven only knows by what means I ſhall defray theſe terrific charges!"

The mere perſonal privations induced by his fallen fortunes, excited few uneaſy ſenſations in the mind of Thaddeus. As he had derived no peculiar gratification from the enjoyment of a magnificent houſe, ſplendid table, and numerous attendants; he had felt equal content in the field, where he was often forced to ſleep on the bare ground, and ſnatch his haſty meal at uncertain intervals. Watching, rough fare, and other hardſhips, were duſt in the path

of honour; he had daſhed through them with light and buoyant ſpirits: and he repined as little, at the actual wants of his forlorn ſtate in exile; till, compelled by friendſhip to contract demands that he could not defray, he was plunged at once into the full horrors of poverty and debt.

He looked at the amount of the bills. The apothecary's was fifteen pounds; the funeral, twenty more. Thaddeus turned pale. The value of all he poſſeſſed, would not produce one half of the ſum; beſides he owed five guineas, to his good landlady, for numerous little comforts appropriated to his deceaſed friend.

"Whatever be the conſequence," cried he, "that excellent woman ſhall not ſuffer by her humanity! If I have to part with the laſt memorial of them who were ſo dear, ſhe ſhall be repaid."

He had ſcarcely ceaſed ſpeaking, when Nancy re-entered the room with a ſaddened countenance, and told him, that the apothecary's young man, and the undertaker, were both below, waiting for anſwers

to

to their letters. The Count, reddening with diſguſt at the unfeeling avidity of theſe men, deſired Nancy to ſay, that he could not ſee either of them to-day, but would ſend to their houſes to-morrow.

In conſequence of this promiſe, the men made their bows to Mrs. Robſon, (who too well gueſſed the reaſon of this meſſage,) and took their leaves.

When Thaddeus put the pictures of his mother and the Palatine, with other trinkets, into his pocket, he could not forbear feeling ſomething like indignation againſt the thoughtleſs meanneſs of the Miſs Dundas's; who, ſince his entrance into their houſe, had never offered any farther liquidation of the large ſum which they now ſtood indebted to him, than the trifling note which had been tranſmitted prior to his attendance, through the hands of Lady Tinemouth.

Whilſt his neceſſities reproached them for this illiberal conduct, his proud heart recoiled at making a requeſt to their charity; for he gathered from the haughty demeanour of Miſs Diana, that what he

was

was entitled to demand, would be given not as a juſt remuneration for labour received, but as alms of humanity to an indigent emigrant.

" I would rather periſh," cried he, putting on his hat, " than aſk that woman for a ſhilling."

When the Count laid his treaſure on the table of the conſiderate pawnbroker, he deſired to have the value of the ſettings, and the pictures put into leather caſes. Mr. Burnet having examined the gold of the minatures, with the other trinkets, declared, on the word of an honeſt man, that he could not give more than fifteen pounds.

With difficulty, Thaddeus ſtifled as torturing a ſigh as ever diſtended his breaſt, whilſt he ſaid,

" I will take it. I only implore you to be careful of the things! trifling as they are, circumſtances with which they were connected, render them valuable to me."

" You may depend on me, Sir," replied the pawnbroker, preſenting him the notes and acknowledgment.

When

When Thaddeus took them, Mr. Burnet's eye was caught by the ring which he wore on his finger.

"That ring ſeems curious! If you won't conſider it impertinent, may I aſk to look at it?"

The Count immediately pulled it off, and forcing a ſmile, replied, "I ſuppoſe it is of little intrinſic value. The ſetting is antique, but the painting is fine."

Burnet breathed on the diamonds. "If you were to ſell it," returned he, I don't think it would fetch more than three guineas. The diamonds are damaged, and the emeralds would be of little uſe, being out of faſhion here; as for the miniature, it goes for nothing."

"Of courſe," ſaid Thaddeus, putting it on again; "but I ſhall never part with it." Whilſt he drew on his glove, Mr. Burnet aſked him, whether the head were not intended for the King of Poland.

The Count, ſurprized, anſwered in the affirmative.

"I thought

"I thought so," answered the man; "it is very like two or three prints which I had in my shop of that king. Indeed I believe I have them some where now: these matters are but a nine days wonder, and the sale is over."

His auditor did not clearly comprehend him, and he told him so.

"I meant nothing," continued he, "to the disparagement of the King of Poland; or of any other great personage, who is much the subject of conversation. I only intended to say, that every thing has its fashion. The ruin of Poland was the fashionable topic for a month after it happened; and now nobody minds it; it is extinct; it is forgotten."

Thaddeus, who felt he had all its miseries written in his bosom, with a clouded brow, bowed to the remarks of Mr. Burnet, and in silence quitted the shop.

Mrs. Robson was standing with a man in the passage, when he arrived at home. Thaddeus saw that the good woman had been weeping; and, from the angry countenance

tenance of her companion, eaſily divined the occaſion of the debate. He aſked Nancy, whom he found in the kitchen, what was the matter.

"Nothing, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "but Mr. White the baker; he has been twice this week to my grandmother, for four pounds which ſhe owes him, and I know ſhe cannot pay him yet."

"Call her in," returned the Count, glad that he at leaſt poſſeſſed the power, by diſcharging his debt to her, to relieve ſo much worth from embarraſſment.

Whilſt Mrs. Robſon obeyed the ſummons of her beloved lodger, he diſtinctly heard the incorrigible baker cry after her, "Remember, miſtreſs, I will not leave this ſpot till I am paid."

"Here, my good Mrs. Robſon," ſaid Thaddeus, ſmiling kindly, and putting five guineas into her hand, "here is the money that you have expended for my poor friend; my gratitude will ever be your due."

Mrs. Robſon received the gold with a low curtſey, and haſtened out of the room,

elated

elated with honeſt triumph, at the opportunity of ſo immediately ſatisfying the rapacity of her creditor.

Thaddeus, having entered his own room, laid the remainder of his money on the bills of the two claimants. It was unequal to the demands of either; yet, in ſome meaſure to be juſt to both, he determined on dividing it between them; and to promiſe the liquidation of the reſt by degrees.

Surely he might hope, that even ſhould the Miſs Dundas's entirely forget his claims on them, his labour could in the courſe of time, make drawings, ſufficient to cover the reſidue of the debt! But he was not permitted to put this calculation to the trial.

When he called on the apothecary, and offered him five guineas, the man refuſed it with inſolence, inſiſting on the whole. Unuſed to the language of compulſion and vulgarity, the Count quitted the ſhop, telling the man he was at liberty to act as he thought fit; and, with no very ſerene countenance, he entered the undertaker's warehouſe. This man was civil: to him,

Thaddeus

Thaddeus gave the ſum, half of which the apothecary had rejected with ſo much deriſion. The politeneſs of the undertaker, a little calmed the irritated temper of the Count; who returned home, pondering on the vile nature of that part of mankind, which can with indifference heap inſult on diſtreſs.

Judging men by his own diſpoſition, he had ſeldom given credence to the poſſibility of ſuch conduct. He had been told of daſtardly ſpirits; but never having ſeen them, and poſſeſſing no prototype within his own breaſt of what he heard, the repeated relation paſſed over his mind without leaving an impreſſion. He had ſprung into the world, filled with animating hopes of virtue and renown. He was virtuous; he became powerful, great, and renowned. Creation ſeemed paradiſe to his eyes: It was the taſk of adverſity, to teach him a different leſſon of mankind. Not leſs virtuous, not leſs great, his fortunes fell, he became poor; the perfidy, the hard-heartedneſs of man, made, and kept him friendleſs. When he wanted ſuccour and conſolation,

ſolation, he found the world peopled by a race too mean, even to bear the ſtamp of the devil.

Whilſt Sobieſki was employed next morning at his drawing, Mrs. Robſon ſent Nancy to ſay, that there were two ſtrange-looking men below, who wanted to ſpeak with him. Not doubting their being meſſengers from the apothecary, he deſired that they might come up ſtairs. When they entered his room, the Count, with the politeneſs ſpontaneous to his ever-wakeful benevolence, roſe. One of the men ſtepped forward, and, laying a ſlip of paper on the table, ſaid, "I arreſt you, Sir, at the ſuit of Mr. Jackſon, the apothecary."

Thaddeus felt his cheek fluſh; but, ſuppreſſing every indignant emotion, he calmly aſked the men, where they were going to take him?

"If you like," replied one of them, "you may be well enough lodged. I never heard a word againſt Clement's in Wych-ſtreet."

"Is

"Is that a priſon?" inquired Thaddeus.

"No, not exactly that, Sir;" anſwered the other man, laughing; "You ſeem to know little of the matter, which for a Frenchman is odd enough! But mayhap you have never a *lock-up-houſe* there? *Howſomever*, if you pay well, Mr. Clements will give you lodgings as long as you like. It is only *poor* rogues, who are *obligated* to go to Newgate; ſuch *Gemmen* as you, can live as *ginteelly* in Wych-ſtreet as at their own houſes."

There was ſuch an air of deriſion about this fellow as he ſpoke and glanced round the room, that Thaddeus, ſternly contracting his brows, deigned to take no farther notice of him; but, turning towards his more civil companion, ſaid:

"Has this perſon informed me rightly? Am I going to a priſon, or am I not? If I do not poſſeſs money to pay Mr. Jackſon, I can have none to ſpend elſewhere."

"Then, you muſt go to Newgate;" anſwered the man, in as ſurly a tone, as his comrade's had been inſolent.

"I'll

"I'll run for a coach, Wilſon," cried the other, opening the room door.

"I will not pay for one," ſaid Thaddeus, at once comprehending the ſort of wretches into whoſe cuſtody he had fallen; "follow me down ſtairs. I ſhall walk."

Mrs. Robſon was in her ſhop as he paſſed to the ſtreet. She called out, "You will come home to dinner, Sir?"

"No," replied he; "but you ſhall hear from me before night."

The men, winking at each other, ſullenly purſued his ſteps down the Lane. In the Strand, Thaddeus aſked them which way he was to proceed.

"Straight on," cried one of them; "moſt folks find the road to a gaol eaſy enough."

Involved in thought, the Count walked forward, unmindful of the ſtare which the well-known occupation of his attendants attracted towards him. When he arrived at Somerſet-houſe, one of the men ſtepped up to him, and ſaid, "We are now nearly oppoſite Wych-ſtreet. You had

had better take your mind again, and go there inſtead of Newgate. I don't much think you will like the debtor's hole."

Thaddeus, coldly thanking him, repeated his determination to be led to Newgate. But when he beheld the immenſe walls, within which he believed he ſhould be immured for life, his feet ſeemed rooted to the ground: and when the maſſy gates were opened, and cloſed upon him, he felt as if ſuddenly deprived of the vital ſpring of exiſtence. A miſt ſpread over his eyes, his ſoul ſhuddered, and with difficulty he followed the men into the place where his commitment was to be ratified. Here, all the proud feelings of his nature, again rallied themſelves round his heart.

The brutal queſtions of the people in office, re-echoed by taunts from the wretches who had brought him to the priſon, were of a complexion ſo much beneath his anſwering, that he ſtood perfectly ſilent during the buſineſs; and when diſmiſſed, without evincing any ſigns of diſcompoſure, followed the turn-key to his cell.

One

One deal chair, a table, and a miſerable bed, were all the furniture it contained. The floor was paved with flags; and the ſides of the apartment daubed with diſcoloured plaſter, part of which having been peeled off by the damp, expoſed to view large ſpaces of the naked ſtones.

Before the turnkey withdrew, he aſked Thaddeus whether he wanted any thing?

"Only a pen, ink, and paper."

The man held out his hand.

"I have no money," replied Sobieſki.

"Then you get nothing here," anſwered the fellow, pulling the door after him.

Thaddeus threw himſelf on the chair, and in the bitterneſs of the moment, exclaimed, "Can theſe ſcoundrels be chriſtians? Can they be men?" He caſt his eyes round him with the wildneſs of deſpair: "All-powerful Heaven! Can it be poſſible, that for a few guineas, I am to be confined in this place during life? In theſe narrow bounds, am I to waſte my youth, my exiſtence? Even ſo; I cannot, I will not, degrade the ſpirit of Poland, by imploring aſſiſtance

assistance from any native of a land, in which avarice has choaked the feelings of humanity."

By the next morning, the first paroxysm of indignation having subsided, Thaddeus entertained a cooler and more reasonable opinion of his situation. He considered, that though he was a prisoner, it was in consequence of debts incurred in behalf of a friend, whose latter hours were rendered less wretched by such means. Feeling, that notwithstanding '*all that man could do unto him*,' he had brought an approving conscience, to heighten the glooms of a dungeon, he resumed his wonted serenity, and continued to distance the impertinent freedom of his gaolers, by a stern dignity, which extorted civility, and commanded their respect.

CHAP. X.

SEVERAL days elapſed, without the inhabitants of Harley-ſtreet hearing any tidings of Thaddeus.

Miſs Dundas never beſtowed a thought on his abſence, except when deſcanting on her favourite ſubject, the inſolence of dependant people, ſhe alleged, his daring to withdraw himſelf, as an inſtance. Miſs Euphemia uttered all her complaints to Miſs Beaufort; whom ſhe accuſed, of not being ſatisfied with ſeducing the affections of Mr. Conſtantine, but ſhe muſt alſo ſpirit him away, leſt by remorſe, he ſhould be induced to renew his former devotion at the ſhrine of her tried conſtancy.

Mary found theſe ſecret conferences, very frequent and very tiezing. She neither believed the Count's paſt devoirs to Euphemia, nor his preſent allegiance to

herſelf. With unquiet feelings, ſhe watched the ſlow decline of every ſucceeding day, hoping, that each knock at the door, would either preſent himſelf, or an apology for his abſence.

In vain her reaſon urged the weakneſs and folly of giving way to the influence of a paſſion as violent as it was unforeſeen. "It is not his perſonal graces;" murmured ſhe, whilſt her dewy eyes remained rivetted on the floor; "it is not them; they have not accompliſhed this effect on me! No; matchleſs as he is; though his countenance expreſſes godlike beauty, when illumined by the rare ſplendours of genius yet, my heart tells me, I would rather ſee all that perfection demoliſhed, than loſe one beam of thoſe bright charities which firſt attracted my eſteem. Yes, Conſtantine!" cried ſhe, riſing in agitation; "I could adore thy virtues, were they even in the boſom of deformity. It is them, that I love; it is them, that are thyſelf! It is thy noble, god-like ſoul, that ſo entirely fills my heart; and will, for ever!"

She recalled the hours, which in his ſociety had glided ſo ſwiftly by, to paſs in review before her. They came, and her tears redoubled. Neither his words, nor his looks, had been kinder to her, than to Miſs Egerton or Lady Sara Roos. She remembered his wild action in the Park: it had tranſported her at the moment; it even now made her heart throb; but ſhe ceaſed to believe it intended more, than an animated expreſſion of gratitude.

An adverſe feeling ſeemed to have taken poſſeſſion of her breaſt. In proportion to the vehemence of Miſs Euphemia's reproaches, (who inſiſted on the paſſion of Thaddeus,) ſhe the more doubted the evidence of thoſe delightful emotions which had ruſhed over her ſoul, when ſhe found her hand ſo fervently preſſed in his.

Euphemia never made a ſecret of the *tendreſſe* ſhe profeſſed: and Miſs Beaufort having been taught by her own heart, to read diſtinctly, the eyes of Lady Sara; the reſult of her obſervations, had long acted as a cauſtic on her peace: it robbed her cheeks of their bloom, and

compelled

compelled her to number the lingering minutes of the night with ſighs. But her deep and modeſt flame aſſumed no violence; retreated far from ſight, it burnt the more intenſely.

Inſtead of over-valuing the fine perſon of Thaddeus, the encomiums which it exacted from even the lips of prejudice, occaſioned one ſource of her pain. She could not bear to think it probable, that the man whom ſhe believed and knew to be gifted with every attribute of goodneſs and heroiſm; might one day be induced to ſacrifice the rich treaſure of his mind, to a creature, who would ſelect him from the reſt, merely on account of his preſent ſuperiority.

Such was the train of Mary's meditations, when covering her face with her handkerchief, ſhe exclaimed in a hurried and perturbed voice, "Ah! Why did I leave my quiet home, to expoſe myſelf to the viciſſitudes of ſociety? ſequeſtered from the world, neither its pageants nor its mortifications could have reached me

there. I have ſeen thee, matchleſs Conſtantine! Like a bright ſtar, thou haſt paſſed before my eyes! Like a being of a ſuperior order! And, I never, never can debaſe my nature, to love another. Thy image ſhall follow me into ſolitude; ſhall conſecrate my ſoul, to the practice of every virtue! I will emulate thy excellence, when, perhaps, thou haſt forgotten that I exiſt."

The fit of deſpondence, which threatened to ſucceed this laſt abrupt reflection, was interrupted by the ſudden entrance of Euphemia. Miſs Beaufort haſtily roſe, and drew her ringlets over her eyes.

"O, Mary!" cried the little beauty, holding up her pretty hands, "What do you think has happened?"

"What?" demanded ſhe in alarm, and haſtening towards the door, "any thing to my aunt?"

"No, no:" anſwered Euphemia, catching her by the arm; "but could my injured heart feel ſatisfaction in revenge, I ſhould now be happy. Puniſhment has overtaken the faithleſs Conſtantine."

Mary

Mary looked aghaſt; and, graſping the back of a chair to prevent herſelf from falling, breathleſsly inquired what ſhe meant?

"Oh! He is ſent to priſon!" cried Euphemia, not regarding the real agitation of her auditor, (ſo entirely was ſhe occupied in appearing overwhelmed with diſtreſs herſelf,) and wringing her hands, ſhe continued in a whimpering voice; "that frightful wretch, Mr. Laſcelles, is juſt come in to dinner. You cannot think, with what deviliſh glee he told me, that about a week ago, as he was driving out of town, he ſaw Mr. Conſtantine with two bailiffs behind him, walking down Fleet-ſtreet! And, beſides, I verily believe, he ſaid that he had irons on."

"Father of Heaven!" ejaculated Mary with a cry of terror, at this *ad limitum* addition of Euphemia's, "What can he have done?"

"Bleſs my ſoul, Mary!" returned Euphemia, ſtaring at her, as ſhe ſat pale and trembling in a chair; "Why, what

frightens you so? Does not every body run in debt, without minding it?"

Miss Beaufort shook her head; and, looking distractedly about her, put her hand to her forehead. Euphemia, now quite alarmed, forced her to drink some water; and, whilst the horror-struck Mary, with ten thousand vague and hideous fancies racking her heart, leaned against the wall; the little beauty, unconscious what part of her narrative occasioned these emotions, thought to obliterate what she had said, by saying more; and determining not to be out-done in '*tender woe*,' drew forth her handkerchief, and putting it to her eyes, resumed in a piteous tone.

"I am sure, I shall hate Lascelles all my life, because he did not stop the men, and inquire what jail they were taking him to! You know Mary, you and I might have visited him. It would have been delightful to have consoled his sad hours! We might have planned his escape."

"In irons!" ejaculated Mary, raising her tearless eye to heaven.

Euphemia

Euphemia coloured at the agonized manner in which theſe words were re-iterated, and rather confuſedly replied, "Not abſolutely in irons. You know that is a metaphorical term for captivity."

"Then, he was not in irons?" cried Miſs Beaufort, ſeizing her hand eagerly, "Tell me, for heaven's ſake tell me, he was not in irons?"

"Why then," returned Euphemia, half angry at being obliged to contradict herſelf; "if you are ſuch a fool, that you cannot underſtand poetical language, I muſt tell you, he was not."

Mary heard no further; but even at the moment when a bright glow overſpread her countenance, fell ſenſeleſs back into the chair.

Euphemia flew immediately to the top of the ſtairs, and ſhrieking violently, ſtood wringing her hands, till Diana and Lady Dundas, followed by ſeveral gentlemen, haſtened out of the ſaloon, and demanded what was the matter? as ſoon as Euphemia had pointed to Mary's dreſſing-room door, ſhe ſtaggered, and ſinking into the arms of

Lord Eleſmere, fell into the moſt outrageous hyſterics. The Marquis, who had juſt dropt in, on his return from St. James's, became ſo poſſeſſed with dread of the agitated lady's tearing his point-lace ruffles, that in almoſt as trembling a ſtate as herſelf, he gladly ſhuffled her into the hands of her maid; and, ſcampering down ſtairs as if all bedlam were at his heels, ſprung into his *vis-a-vis*, and drove off like lightening.

When Miſs Beaufort opened her eyes, at the ſight of ſuch a crowd ſhe had nearly relapſed; but, trying to repel her confuſion, ſhe roſe, and ſupporting herſelf on the arm of Mrs. Dorothy's maid, thanked the company for their attention, and deſired to be aſſiſted to her chamber.

Meanwhile, Euphemia, who had been carried down into the ſaloon, thought it time to raiſe her lily head, and utter a few incoherent words: the inſtant they were breathed, Miſs Dundas and Mr. Laſcelles, in one voice, demanded what was the matter?

"Has

"Has not Mary told you?" returned her ſiſter, languidly opening her eyes.

"No;" anſwered Laſcelles, rubbing his hands with delighted curioſity; "Come, let us have it?"

Euphemia, pleaſed at this, and loving myſtery with all her heart, waved her hand ſolemnly, and in an awful tone, replied; "Then, it paſſes not *my* lips."

"What Phemy!" cried he, "you want us to believe that you have ſeen a ghoſt? But you forget, they don't walk at mid-day."

"Believe what you like," returned ſhe, with an air of conſequential contempt; "I am ſatisfied to keep the ſecret."

Miſs Dundas burſt into a provoking laugh; and calling her the moſt incorrigable little idiot ſhe had ever ſeen, encouraged Laſcelles to join in the ridicule. Determining to gratify his ſpleen, if he could not ſatisfy his curioſity, this witleſs coxcomb continued the whole day in Harley-ſtreet, for the mere pleaſure of tormenting Euphemia. From the dinner hour until twelve at night, neither his drowſy fancy, nor wakeful malice, could

find one other weapon of aſſault, than the ſtale jokes attending *myſterious chambers, lovers incognito;* or the ſilly addition of two Cupid-ſtruck ſweeps, hopping down the chimney, to pay their addreſſes to the fair friends. Diana, talked of Jupiter with his thunder; and, patting her ſiſter under the chin, added, "I cannot doubt that Mary is the favoured Semelé: But, my dear, you have overacted your character! As confidant, a few tears were enough when your lady fainted." During theſe attacks, Euphemia reclined pompouſly on a ſofa, and not deigning a reply, repelled them with much conceit and haughtineſs.

Miſs Beaufort remained above an hour alone in her chamber, before ſhe ventured to go near her aunt. Hurt to the ſoul, that the idle folly of Euphemia ſhould have arouſed a terror which had completely unveiled to the eyes of that inconſiderate girl, the empire which Thaddeus held over her fate; Mary, overwhelmed with ſhame, and arraigning her eaſy credulity, threw herſelf on the bed.

Horror

Horror-ſtruck at hearing he was led along the ſtreets in chains, ſhe could have no other idea, but that hurried into the commiſſion of ſome dreadful deed, he was become amenable to the laws, and might ſuffer an ignominious death. Theſe thoughts, having ruſhed at once on her heart, had deprived her of all ſelf-command. In the conviction that he was a murderer, ſhe felt, as if her life, her honour, her ſoul were annihilated. And when, in conſequence of her agonies, Euphemia confeſſed that ſhe had in this laſt matter, told a falſeood, the tumult of her joy took refuge in inſenſibility.

Before Miſs Beaufort quitted her room, various plans ſuggeſted themſelves to relieve the unfortunate ſituation of Thaddeus. She found no heſitation in believing him poor; and perhaps rendered wretchedly ſo, by the burthen of that ſick friend, whom ſhe ſuſpected, might be ſome near relation. At any rate, ſhe reſolved that another ſun ſhould not paſs over her head, and ſhine on him in a priſon. Having determined to pay all his debts herſelf; ſhe

next

next thought of how ſhe might manage the affair without betraying the hand from whence the aſſiſtance came. Had her aunt been well enough to leave the houſe, ſhe could not have ſcrupled at unfolding to her, the recent calamity of Mr. Conſtantine. But well aware that Mrs. Dorothy's maidenly nicety would be outraged at a young woman appearing the ſole mover in ſuch a buſineſs, ſhe conceived herſelf obliged at preſent, entirely to withhold her confidence, and decide on proſecuting the whole tranſaction alone.

In conſequence of theſe meditations, her ſpirits became leſs diſcompoſed; and, turning towards Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet's apartments, ſhe found the good old lady ſipping her chocolate.

"What is this that I have juſt heard, my dear Mary? Williams tells me that you have been ill?"

Miſs Beaufort returned her aunt's gracious inquiry with an affectionate kiſs; and, proceeding to inform her, that ſhe had only been alarmed by an invention of Miſs Euphemia's; ſhe begged that the ſubject might

might drop, it being merely one out of the many ſchemes, which ſhe believed that young lady had deviſed to give her torment.

"Ah!" replied Mrs. Dorothy, "I hope I ſhall be well enough to travel in the courſe of a few days! I can now walk with a ſtick; and, upon my word, I am heartily tired, both of Lady Dundas and her daughters."

Mary expreſſed ſimilar ſentiments with theſe; but, as the declaration paſſed her lips, a ſigh almoſt buried the laſt word. Go when ſhe would, ſhe muſt leave Conſtantine behind; leave him, without an expectation of beholding him more; without a hope of penetrating that ſenſative care, with which he had ever eluded any attempt to diſcover his birth or misfortunes. She ſighed over this refinement on delicacy, and '*loved him dearer for his myſtery.*'

When the dawn broke next morning, it ſhone on Mary's yet uncloſed eyes. Sleep could find no languid faculty in her head, whilſt her heart was agitated with plans

plans for the relief of Thaddeus. The idea of viſiting the coffee-houſe to which ſhe knew the Miſs Dundaſes directed their letters, and of aſking queſtions about a young and handſome man, made her timidity ſhrink.

"But," exclaimed ſhe, "I am not going on an errand that need cauſe a bluſh on the cheek of prudery itſelf. I am going to impart ſome alleviation to the ſufferings of the nobleſt creature that ever walked the earth!"

Perhaps, there are few perſons, who, being auditors of this ſpeech, would have decided quite ſo candidly on the ſuperlative by which it was concluded? Mary herſelf, was not wholly diveſted of doubt about the iſſue of her conduct; but, conſcious that her motive was pure, ſhe deſcended to the breakfaſt-room with a quieter mind than countenance.

Never before having had an occaſion to throw a falſe gloſs on her actions, ſhe ſcarcely looked up during breakfaſt. When the cloth was removed, ſhe roſe ſuddenly from her chair, and turning to Mrs. Dorothy,

Dorothy, who ſat at the other end of the parlour with her foot on a ſtool, ſhe ſaid, "Good bye, aunt. I am going to make ſome particular calls, but I ſhall be back in a few hours." Luckily, no one obſerved her bluſhing face whilſt ſhe ſpoke, nor the manner in which ſhe ſhook hands with the old lady, and hurried out of the room.

Breathleſs with confuſion, ſhe could ſcarcely ſtand when ſhe arrived in her own chamber; but feeling that no time could be loſt, ſhe tied on a muſlin cloak, covered her head with a large ſummer bonnet, and put a long ſhawl with a veil into her pocket. She heſitated a moment at her chamber-door; her eyes filled with tears drawn from her heart, by that keen ſpirit of truth which had ever been the guardian of her conduct. Looking up to heaven, ſhe ſunk down on her knees, and exclaimed with impetuoſity, "Father of Mercy! it is thou only that knoweſt my heart! Direct me, I beſeech thee! Let me not commit any thing unworthy of myſelf, or of the unhappy Conſtantine—for whom I would ſacrifice my life, but not my duty to thee!"

Re-aſſured

Re-aſſured by the confidence which this ſimple act of devotion had inſpired, ſhe took her paraſol, and deſcended the ſtairs. The porter was alone in the hall. She inquired for her ſervant.

"He is not returned, Madam."

Miſs Beaufort, having foreſeen the neceſſity of getting rid of all attendants, had ſent her footman on an errand as far as Cheapſide.

"It is of no conſequence, "returned ſhe to the porter, who was juſt going to propoſe one of Lady Dundas's men; "I cannot meet with any thing diſagreeable at this time of day, ſo I ſhall walk alone."

The man opened the door; and Mary, with a bounding heart, haſtened down the ſtreet, acroſs the ſquare, and at the bottom of Orchard Street, ſtepped into a hackney coach, which ſhe ordered to drive to Slaughter's coffee-houſe, St. Martin's-lane.

She drew up the glaſſes; then taking the ſhawl and veil, with trembling hands, covered her graceful figure; hoping, that the metamorphoſis might make her paſs very

very well for a ſervant-maid. With difficulty ſhe could individualize the many thoughts which agitated her anxious mind whilſt the carriage rolled along; and when it drew up at the coffee-houſe, ſhe involuntarily retreated back into the corner. The coach door was opened.

"Will you alight, Ma'am?"

"No, call a waiter."

A waiter immediately appeared; and Miſs Beaufort, in a tolerably collected voice, inquired if Mr. Conſtantine lived there?

"No, Ma'am."

A cold dew ſtood on Mary's forehead; but taking courage from a latent and laſt hope, ſhe added, "I know that he has had letters directed to this place."

"O! I beg your pardon, Ma'am?" returned the man, evidently recollecting himſelf; "That is true, I remember a perſon of that name has received letters from hence, but they were always fetched away by a little girl."

"And do you not know where he lives?"

"No,

"No, Ma'am;" anſwered he, "yet ſome one elſe may; I will inquire."

Miſs Beaufort bowed her head in token of acknowledgement, and ſat ſhivering with ſuſpence, till he returned followed by another man.

"This perſon, Ma'am," reſumed he, "ſays he can tell you."

"Thank you, thank you!" cried Mary; then bluſhing at her eagerneſs, ſhe ſtopped, and drew back into the carriage.

"I cannot for certain;" ſaid the man, "but I know the girl very well by ſight, who comes for the letters; and I have often ſeen her ſtanding at the door of a chandler's ſhop, a good way down the lane. I think it is No. 5, or 6. I ſent a woman there, who came after the ſame gentleman, about a fortnight ago. I dare ſay he lives there."

Mary's expectations ſunk again, when ſhe found that ſhe had nothing but a *dare ſay* to depend on; and, giving half a crown to each of her informers, ſhe deſired the coachman to drive as they would direct him.

Whilſt

Whilſt the carriage drove down the lane, with a heart full of fears ſhe looked from ſide to ſide, almoſt believing that ſhe would know by intuition, the houſe which had contained Conſtantine. When the man checked his horſes, and her eyes fell on the little mean dwelling of Mrs. Robſon, ſhe ſmothered a deep ſigh.

"Can this be the houſe in which Conſtantine has lived? How comfortleſs!—And ſhould it not," thought ſhe, as the man got off his box to enquire, "where ſhall I go for information?"

The appearance of Mrs. Robſon, and her immediate affirmative to the queſtion, "Are theſe Mr. Conſtantine's lodgings?" at once diſpelled this laſt anxiety. Encouraged by the motherly expreſſion of the good woman's manner, Mary begged leave to alight. Mrs. Robſon readily offered her arm; and, with many apologies for the diſordered ſtate of the houſe, led her up ſtairs to the room which had been the Count's home.

Mary trembled violently; but ſeeing that every thing depended on ſelf-command,

mand, with apparent tranquillity, ſhe received the chair that was preſented to her, and turning her eyes from the books and drawings which told her ſo truly in whoſe apartment ſhe was, ſhe deſired Mrs. Robſon, who continued ſtanding, to be ſeated. The good woman obeyed: after ſome trepidation, Miſs Beaufort aſked where Mr. Conſtantine was? Mrs. Robſon coloured, and looking at her queſtioner for ſome time, as if doubting what to ſay, burſt into tears.

Mary's ready eyes felt much inclined to flow in concert; but ſubduing the ſtrong emotions which ſhook her breaſt, ſhe added, "I do not come here out of an impertinent curioſity. I have heard of the misfortunes of Mr. Conſtantine. I am well known to his friends."

"Dear lady!" cried the good woman, graſping at any proſpect of ſuccour to her benefactor; "If he has friends, who ever they are, tell them, he is the nobleſt, moſt humane gentleman in the world. Tell them, he has ſaved me and mine, from the deepeſt want; and now he is

ſent

ſent to priſon, becauſe he cannot pay the cruel doctor that attended the poor dead General!"

"What, is his friend dead?" ejaculated Mary, unable to reſtrain the tears which now ſtreamed over her face.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Robſon; "Poor old gentleman! he is dead ſure enough; and, Heaven knows, many has been the dreary hours that dear young man has watched by his pillow! He died in that room."

Mary's ſwimming eyes would not allow her to diſcern objects through the open door of that apartment within which the heart of Thaddeus had undergone ſuch variety of miſery. Feeling an irreſiſtible wiſh to know whether the deceaſed were any relation of Conſtantine's, ſhe pauſed a moment to compoſe the agitation that might have betrayed her, and then aſked.

"I thought ma'am," replied Mrs. Robſon, "that you ſaid you knew his friends?"

"Only

"Only his Engliſh ones," returned Mary, a little confuſed at the ſuſpicion this anſwer implied; "I had imagined that this old gentleman might have been his father, or an uncle, or ——"

"O no," interrupted Mrs Robſon, ſorrowfully; "he has neither father, mother, nor uncle, in the wide world. He once told me they were all dead, and that he ſaw them die. Alas! Sweet ſoul! What a power of griefs he muſt have ſeen in his young life! But Heaven will favour him at laſt for though he is in misfortune himſelf, he has been a bleſſing to the widow and the orphan!"

"Do you know the amount of his debts?" aſked Mary.

"Only thirty pounds," returned Mrs. Robſon; "and for that, they took him out of this room a week ago; and hurried him away without letting me know a word of the matter. I believe, to this hour, I ſhould not have known where he was, if that brute, Mr. Jackſon, had not come to demand all that Mr. Conſtantine had left in my care. But I would not

not let him have it: I told the man, if my lodger had filled my houſe with bags of gold, *he* ſhould not touch a ſhilling; and then the ill-natured wretch abuſed me, and told me that Mr. Conſtantine was in Newgate."

"In Newgate!"

"Yes, Madam. I immediately ran there, and found him more able to comfort me, than I was able to ſpeak to him."

"Then be at reſt, my good woman," returned Miſs Beaufort, riſing from her chair; "when you next hear of Mr. Conſtantine, he ſhall be at liberty. He has friends, who will not ſleep till he is out of priſon."

"May heaven bleſs you and them, dear lady!" cried Mrs. Robſon, weeping with joy, "for they will releaſe the moſt generous heart alive."

Mary caſt a wiſhful look on the drawings which ſtood on a bureau; then withdrawing her eyes with a deep ſigh, ſhe deſcended the ſtairs. At the ſtreet-door, ſhe took Mrs. Robſon's hand, and not

relinquiſhing it till ſhe was ſeated in the coach, preſſed it warmly, and leaving within it a purſe of twenty guineas, ordered the man to return whence he came.

Now that the temerity of going herſelf to learn the particulars of Mr. Conſtantine's fate had been atchieved, determined as ſhe was not to cloſe her eyes whilſt the man whom ſhe valued above her life remained a priſoner and in ſorrow, ſhe thought it beſt to conſult with Mrs. Dorothy reſpecting the ſpeedieſt means of compaſſing his emancipation.

In Oxford-road, ſhe deſired the man to proceed to Harley-ſtreet. She had alighted at Lady Dundas's door, paid the coach, and ſtepped into the hall, before ſhe perceived that a travelling carriage belonging to her guardian, had driven away to afford room for her humble equipage.

"Is Sir Robert Somerſet come to town?" ſhe haſtily enquired of the porter.

"No, Madam; but Mr. Somerſet has juſt arrived."

The

The next moment Miſs Beaufort was in the drawing-room, and claſped within the arms of her couſin.

"Dear Mary!"—"Dear Pembroke!" were the firſt words which paſſed between theſe two affectionate friends.

Mrs. Dorothy, who doated on her nephew, taking his hand fondly, as he ſeated himſelf between her and his couſin, ſaid, in a congratulatory voice, "Mary, our dear boy has come to town purpoſely to take us down."

"Yes, indeed," rejoined he; "my father is moped to death for want of you both. You know that I am a ſad run-about. Lord Arun and Mr. Loftus have been gone theſe ten days to his lordſhip's aunt's, in Bedfordſhire; and Sir Robert is ſo completely weary of ſolitude, that he has commanded me," bowing to the other ladies, "to run off with all the fair inhabitants of this houſe, ſooner than leave you behind."

"I ſhall be happy at another opportunity to viſit Somerſet Caſtle," returned Lady Dundas; "but I am conſtrained

to ſpend this ſummer in Dumbartonſhire: I have not yet ſeen the eſtate that my poor dear Sir Hector bought of the Duke of Dumfries."

Pembroke offered no attempt to ſhake this reſolution. In the two or three morning calls which he had made with Sir Robert Somerſet on the rich widow, he had ſeen ſufficient to regard her arrogant vulgarity with diſguſt; and for her daughters, they were of too common a ſtamp, to occupy his mind any deeper than with a magic lantern impreſſion of a tall woman with bold eyes, and the prettieſt little blue-eyed fairy he had ever beheld.

After half an hour's converſation with this family group, Miſs Beaufort ſunk again into abſtraction. During the firſt month of Mary's acquaintance with Thaddeus, ſhe had mentioned, in her correſpondence with Pembroke, having met with a very intereſting and accompliſhed emigrant, in the quality of a tutor at Lady Dundas's. But her couſin, in his replies, beginning to banter her on the plea of pity being allied to love, ſhe gradually

dually dropped all mention of his name, as ſhe too truly found, by what inſenſible degrees the union had taken place within her own breaſt. She remembered theſe particulars, whilſt a new method of attaining the deſired end, ſuggeſted itſelf; and determining, (however extraordinary her conduct might ſeem,) to reſt on the rectitude of her motives, ſhe reſolved, that as a man muſt be the propereſt perſon to tranſact ſuch a buſineſs with propriety, ſhe would engage Pembroke for her agent, without troubling Mrs. Dorothy about the affair.

So deeply was ſhe abſorbed in theſe reflections, that Somerſet obſerving her vacant eye fixed on the oppoſite wall, took her hand, with an arch ſmile, and exclaimed,

"Mary! What is the matter? I hope, Lady Dundas, you have not ſuffered any one to run away with her heart? You know that I am her couſin, and it is my unalienable right."

Lady Dundas replied, that young ladies beſt knew their own ſecrets.

"That may be, Madam," rejoined he, "but I won't allow Miſs Beaufort to know any thing that ſhe does not transfer to me. Is not that true, Mary?"

"Yes," whiſpered ſhe, colouring; "and the ſooner you afford me an opportunity to intereſt you in one, the more I ſhall feel obliged to you."

Pembroke preſſed her hand in token of aſſent; and a deſultory converſation continuing for another half hour, Mary, who dreaded the waſting of one minute in a day, ſo momentous to her peace, ſat uneaſily, till her aunt propoſed retiring to dreſs for dinner, and requeſted Pembroke to aſſiſt her up ſtairs.

When he returned to the drawing-room, to his extreme ſatisfaction, he found all the party ſeparated, excepting Miſs Beaufort, who was ſtanding by one of the windows, evidently loſt in thought. He approached her, and taking her hand, led her back to the ſofa ſhe had quitted.

"Come, my dear couſin," ſaid he, in an affectionate voice, "how can I oblige you?"

Mary

Mary ſtruggled with her confuſion. Had ſhe leſs loved Thaddeus, ſhe found ſhe could with greater eaſe have related the intereſt which ſhe took in his fate. She tried to ſpeak diſtinctly, and ſhe accompliſhed it; although her burning cheek and downcaſt look, told to the fixed eye of Pembroke, what ſhe vainly attempted to conceal.

"You can, indeed, oblige me! You muſt remember a Mr. Conſtantine! I once mentioned him to you in my letters."

"I do, Mary. You thought him amiable!"

"He was the intimate friend of Lady Tinemouth," returned ſhe, ſtriving to look up, but the piercing expreſſion which ſhe met from the eyes of Somerſet, beating hers down again, covered her face and neck with deeper bluſhes: ſhe panted for for breath.

"Dear Mary!" ſaid Pembroke, pitying her embarraſſment, whilſt he dreaded that her gentle heart had indeed become the victim of ſome accompliſhed and inſidious foreigner, "Rely on me, my

beloved couſin: conſider me as a brother. If you have entangled yourſelf—"

Miſs Beaufort gueſſed what he would ſay; and, interrupting him, added, with a more aſſured air, "No, Pembroke, I have no entanglements. I am going to aſk your friendly aſſiſtance in behalf of a brave and unfortunate Polander." Pembroke reddened, and ſhe went on. "Mr. Conſtantine is a gentleman. Lady Tinemouth tells me, he has been a ſoldier, and that he loſt all his poſſeſſions in the ruin of his country. Her ladyſhip introduced him here: I have ſeen him often, and I know him to be worthy the eſteem of every honourable heart. He is now in priſon, in Newgate, for a debt of thirty pounds, and I aſk you to go and releaſe him? That is my requeſt, my ſecret; and I confide in your diſcretion, that you will keep it, even from him."

"Dear, generous, lovely Mary!" cried Pembroke, kiſſing her hand, "it is thus that you always act! Poſſeſſed of all the ſoftneſs of thy ſex, deareſt girl," added he ſtill more affectionately, "nature has not alloyed it with one particle of weakneſs!"

Mary

Mary ſmiled and ſighed: If to love tenderly, to be devoted, life and ſoul to one being, whom ſhe conſidered as the moſt perfect work of creation, be weakneſs? Mary felt that ſhe was the weakeſt of the weak; and with a languid deſpondence at her heart, was opening her lips to give ſome directions to her couſin, when the attentions of both were arreſted by a ſhrill noiſe of ſpeakers talking above ſtairs. Before the couſins had time to make an obſervation, the diſputants deſcended towards the drawing-room with a violent clamour, and burſting open the door, preſented the enraged figure of Lady Dundas, followed by Diana, who with a no leſs ſwollen countenance, was ſcolding vociferouſly, and dragging forward the weeping Euphemia.

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Somerſet, amazed at ſo extraordinary a ſcene, "What is the matter?"

Lady Dundas lifted up her clenched hands in a paſſion. "A jade! a huſſy!" cried ſhe, incapable to articulate more.

Miſs Dundas, ſtill graſping the hands of her ſtruggling ſiſter, broke out next, and turning furiouſly towards Mary, exclaimed, "You ſee, Madam, what diſgrace your ridiculous conduct to that vagabond foreigner has brought on our family! This bad girl has followed your example, and done worſe; ſhe has fallen in love with him!"

Mary, pale and trembling at ſo rude an accuſation, was unable to ſpeak. Loſt in wonder, and incenſed at his couſin's goodneſs having been the dupe of impoſition, Pembroke ſtood ſilent whilſt Lady Dundas took up the ſubject.

"Ay," cried ſhe, ſhaking her daughter by the ſhoulder, "You little minx! if your ſiſter had not picked up theſe abominable verſes which you choſe to write on the abſence of this beggarly fellow, I ſuppoſe you would have finiſhed the buſineſs by running off with him? But you ſhall go down to Scotland, and be locked up for months. I won't have Sir Hector Dundas's family diſgraced by a daughter of mine."

"For

"For pity's ſake, Lady Dundas," ſaid Pembroke, ſtepping between her vulgar ladyſhip and the trembling Euphemia, "do compoſe yourſelf. I dare ſay your daughter is pardonable. In theſe caſes, the fault in general lies with our ſex. We are the ſeducers."

Mary felt obliged to re-ſeat herſelf; and with pale attention, ſhe liſtened to the reply of the frightened Euphemia; who, half aſſured that her whim of creating a mutual paſſion in the breaſt of Thaddeus was no longer tenable, without either ſhame or remorſe exclaimed, "Indeed Mr. Somerſet, you are right. I never ſhould have thought of Mr. Conſtantine, if he had not teized me every time he came with his violent love."

Mary roſe haſtily from her chair. Though Euphemia coloured at the ſuddenneſs of this motion, and the immediate flaſh which ſhe met from her eye, ſhe went on; "I know Miſs Beaufort will deny it, becauſe ſhe thinks he is in love with her; but indeed, indeed, he has ſworn a thouſand times on his knees, that he was a Ruffian

a Ruſſian nobleman in diſguiſe, and adored me above every one elſe in the world."

"Scoundrel!" cried Pembroke, inflamed with indignation at this double conduct. Afraid to read in the expreſſive countenance of Mary her ſhame and horror at this diſcovery, he turned his eyes on her with trepidation; when, to his ſurpriſe, he beheld her ſtanding perfectly unmoved, by the ſide of the ſofa from whence ſhe had ariſen. She advanced with a calm ſtep towards Euphemia; and, taking hold of the hand which concealed her face whilſt uttering this laſt falſehood, ſhe drew it away; and regarding her with a ſerene but penetrating look, "Euphemia!" ſaid ſhe, "you know well, that you are ſlandering an innocent and an unfortunate man. You know, that never in his life did he give you the ſlighteſt reaſon to ſuppoſe that he was attached to you! And as for myſelf, I can alſo clear him of making profeſſions to me.—Upon the honour of my word, I declare," added ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to the whole groupe, "that he never breathed a ſentence to me, beyond mere

mere reſpect. By this laſt deviation of Euphemia from truth, you may form an eſtimate how far the reſt ſhe has alleged deſerves credit."

The young lady burſt into a vehement paſſion of tears: "I will not be brow-beat and inſulted, Miſs Beaufort!" cried ſhe, taking refuge in noiſe, ſince right had deſerted her; "You know you would fight his battles through thick and thin! elſe you would not have fallen into fits yeſterday, when I told you he was ſent to jail."

This laſt aſſault ſtruck Mary motionleſs; and Lady Dundas lifting up her hands, exclaimed, "Good Lord, keep me from the forward miſſes of theſe times!—As for you, Miſs Euphemia," added ſhe, ſeizing her daughter by the arm, "you ſhall leave town to-morrow morning. I will have no more tutoring and falling in love in my houſe; and for you, Miſs Beaufort," turning to Mary, who having recovered herſelf, ſtood at a little diſtance, "I ſhall take care to warn Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet to keep an eye over your conduct."

"Madam,"

"Madam," replied she, indignantly, "I shall never do any thing which can dishonour either my family or myself; and of that, Mrs. Dorothy Somerset is too well assured, to doubt, for an instant, even should calumny be as busy with me as it has been injurious to Mr. Constantine."

Mary walked towards the door. When she passed Mr. Somerset, who stood bewildered, and frowning beside Miss Dundas, she said, in a collected and decisive voice, "Pembroke, I shall leave the room, but remember I do not release you from your engagement."

Staggered by the open firmness of her manner, he looked after her as she withdrew, and was almost inclined to believe that she possessed the right side of the argument. Malice did not allow him to think so long. The moment the door closed on Miss Beaufort, both the sisters fell on him pell-mell; and the prejudiced illiberality of the one, supported by the ready falsehoods of the other, soon dislodged all favourable impressions from the mind of Somerset, and filled him anew with displeasure.

In

In the midſt of Diana's third harangue, Lady Dundas having ordered Euphemia to be taken to her chamber, Mr. Somerſet was left alone more incenſed than ever againſt Thaddeus, whom he now conſidered in the light of an adventurer, concealing his poverty, and perhaps his crimes, beneath a garb of lies. That ſuch a character could, by means of his fine perſon, and a few meretricious talents, work himſelf into the confidence of Mary Beaufort, pierced her couſin to the ſoul; and as he mounted the ſtairs with an intent to ſeek her in her dreſſing-room, he could not forbear thinking, what ſatisfaction it would afford him, to hear that Conſtantine was hanged.

When he opened the room door, he found Miſs Beaufort with his aunt. The inſtant he appeared, the ever-benevolent face of Mrs. Dorothy contracted into a frown.

"Nephew!" cried ſhe, "I ſhall not take it well of you, if you give ſtronger credence to the paſſionate and vulgar aſſertions of Lady Dundas and her daughters,

ters, than you chooſe to beſtow on the tried veracity of your couſin, Mary?"

Pembroke felt that if his countenance had been a faithful tranſcript of his mind, Miſs Beaufort did not err in ſuppoſing that he believed the foreigner to be a villain. Feeling it impoſſible to relinquiſh his reaſon, into what he now denominated the partial hands of his aunt and couſin, he perſiſted in his opinion to both the ladies, that their unſuſpicious natures had been rendered ſubſervient to knavery and artifice.

"I would not, willingly, my dear Madam," ſaid he, addreſſing Mrs. Dorothy, "think ſo meanly of your ſex, as to imagine that an atrocity can exiſt in the female heart, which could give birth to cruel and unprovoked calumnies againſt an innocent man. I cannot ſuſpect the Miſs Dundases of ſuch needleſs guilt; particularly poor Euphemia, whom I pity. Lady Dundas forced me to read her verſes; and they were too full of love and regret for this adventurer, to come from the ſame breaſt which could wantonly

tonly blacken his character. Such wicked inconſiſtencies in ſo young a woman, are not half ſo probable as that you, my dear aunt and couſin, have both been deceived."

"Well nephew," returned the old Lady, "you are very peremptory. Methinks a little more mercy of opinion would better become your youth! *I* knew nothing of this unhappy man's preſent diſtreſs, till Miſs Beaufort mentioned it to me; but before ſhe breathed a word in his favour, I had conceived a very high reſpect for his merits: from the firſt hour in which I ſaw him, I gathered by his deportment and converſation, that they were far above his fortunes. I thought ſo; I ſtill think ſo; and, notwithſtanding all which the Dundases may chuſe to fabricate, I am determined to believe the aſſertions of an honeſt countenance.

Pembroke ſmiled, whilſt he compelled his aunt's reluctant hand into his, and ſaid, "I ſee, my dear Madam, that you are bigoted to the idol of your own fancy! I do not in the leaſt doubt this Mr. Conſtantine's enchantments; but you muſt par-

don me, if I keep my ſenſes at liberty. I ſhall think of him, as I could almoſt ſwear he deſerves, although I am aware I hazard your affection by my firmneſs." He then turned to Mary, who, with a ſwelling and diſtreſſed heart, was ſtanding by the chimney; "Forgive me, my deareſt couſin," continued he, addreſſing her in a ſoftened voice; "that I feel myſelf forced to appear harſh? It is the firſt time I ever diſſented from you; it is the firſt time, Mary, I ever thought you prejudiced!"

Mary drew the back of her hand over her gliſtening eyes. All the tender affections of Pembroke's boſom ſmote him at once; and throwing his arms round his couſin's waiſt, he ſtrained her to his breaſt, and added, "Ah! why, dear girl, muſt I love you better for thus giving me pain? Every way, my darling Mary is more eſtimable. Even now, whilſt I oppoſe you, I feel, that though your goodneſs is abuſed, it has been cheated into error by the affectation of honourable calamities!"

Mary felt, " that if the prudence of reſerve and decorum dictates ſilence in ſome circumſtances, in others, a prudence of an higher order would juſtify her in declaring her thoughts." Accordingly, ſhe withdrew from the claſping arms of Mr. Somerſet; and whilſt her beautiful figure ſeemed to dilate into more than its uſual dignity, ſhe mildly replied,

" Think what you pleaſe, Pembroke; I ſhall not contend with you: Mr. Conſtantine is of a nature not to be hidden by obſcurity; his character will defend itſelf: and all that I have to add is this, I do not releaſe you from your promiſe. Could a woman tranſact the affair with propriety, I ſhould not keep you to ſo diſagreeable an office; but I have paſſed my word to myſelf, that I ſhall neither '*ſlumber* nor *ſleep*,' till he is out of priſon." She put a pocket-book into Pembroke's hand, and added, " Take that, my dear couſin; and without ſuffering a ſyllable to tranſpire, by which he may ſuſpect who ſerved him, accompliſh what I have deſired."

" I will

"I will obey you, Mary," returned he, looking gravely; "but I am ſorry that ſuch rare enthuſiaſm was not awakened by a worthier object. When you ſee me again, I hope I ſhall be enabled to ſay, that your ill-placed generoſity is ſatisfied."

"Fie, nephew, fie!" cried Mrs. Dorothy, "I could not have ſuppoſed you capable of conferring a favour ſo ungraciouſly."

Mr. Somerſet, pained at what he nominated the obſtinate infatuation of Miſs Beaufort; and, if poſſible, more chagrined, by what he conſidered the blind and abſurd encouragement of his aunt, loſt the whole of her laſt reprimand, in his hurry to quit the room.

Diſturbed, diſpleaſed, and anxious, he ſtepped into a hackney-coach. Ordering it to drive to Newgate, he determined to go through the buſineſs, without expoſing himſelf to an interview with a man whom he muſt now condemn as an artful and unprincipled villain.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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